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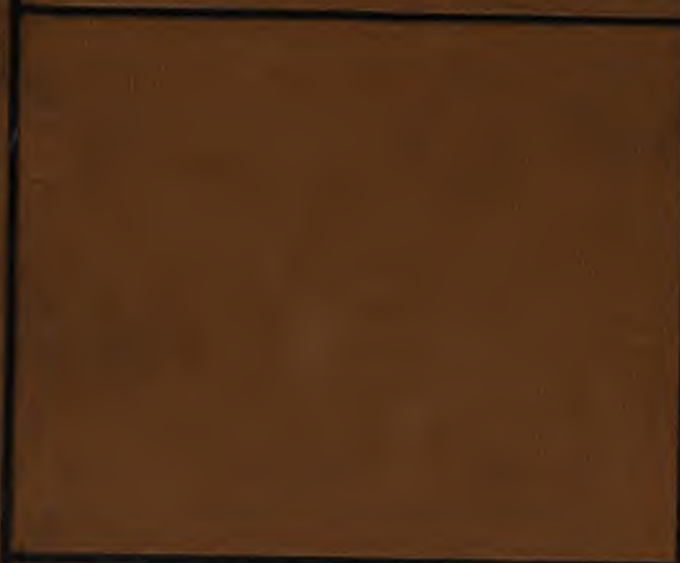
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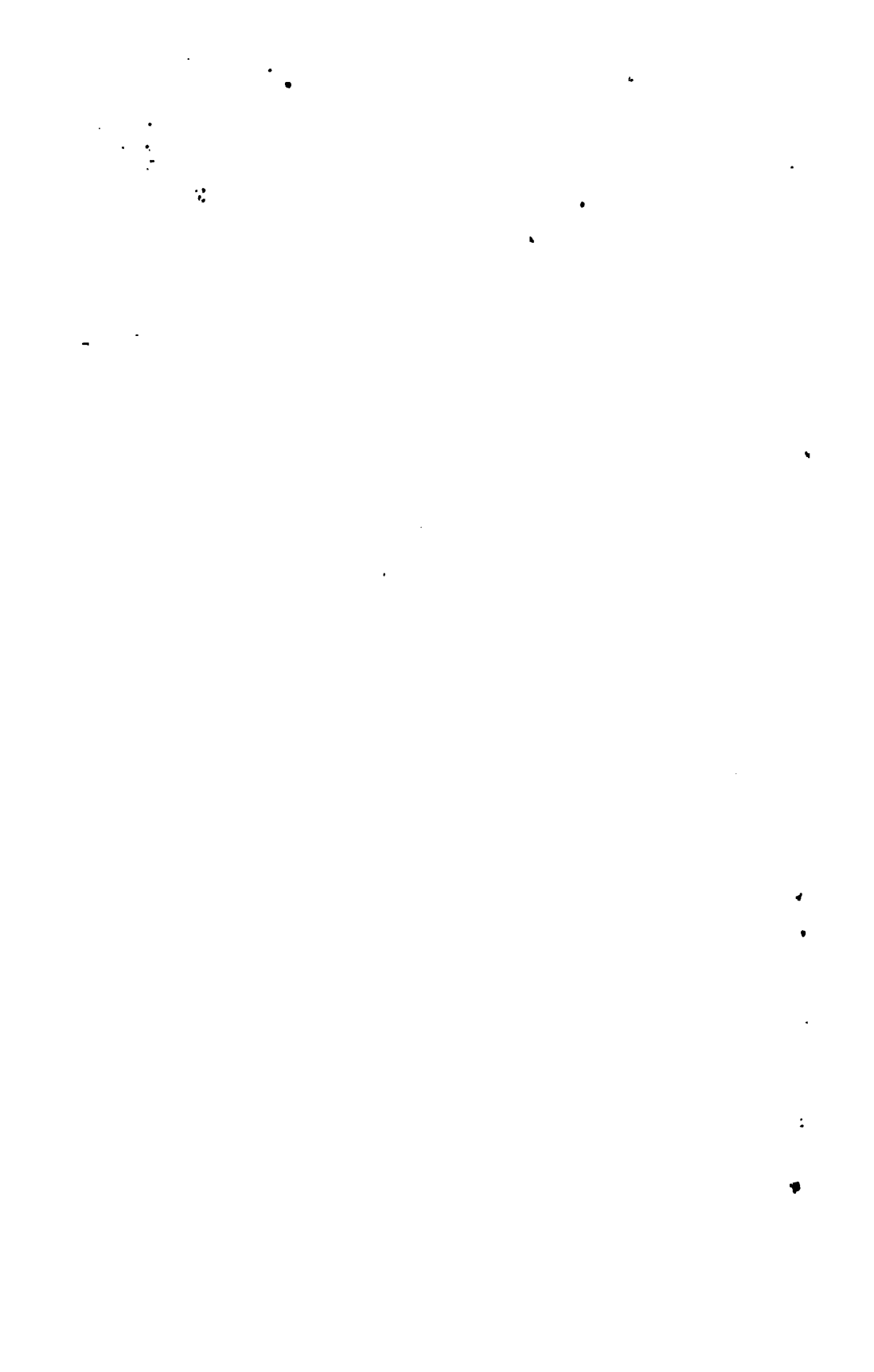




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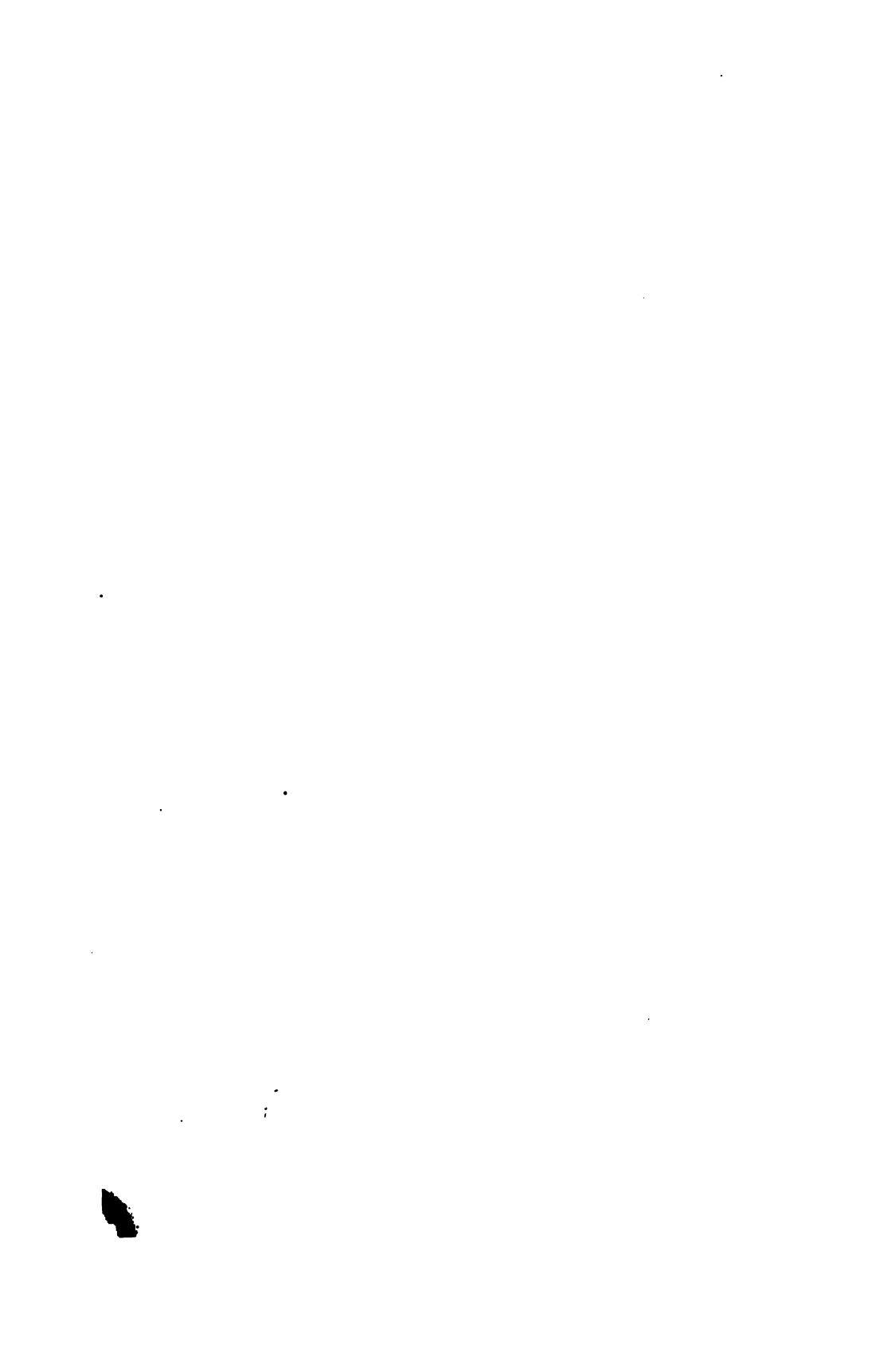






LIFE AND TIMES
OF
ALEXANDER I.

EMPEROR OF ALL THE RUSSIAS.



LIFE AND TIMES
OF
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BY
C. JOYNEVILLE.

“My rival in glory and power.”—NAPOLEON, *loq.*

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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CONTENTS

OF

THE SECOND VOLUME.

CHAPTER I.

WAR WITH ENGLAND.

Russian and French Alliance, 1. The Russians in Corfu and Italy, 6. The Poles and Napoleon, 13. Wilson's Mission, 17. Alexander's Conversations with Savary, 20. The Russians on the Danube, 20. Russia Declares War with England, 30. Napoleon's Oppressive Rule in France, 32. Death of the last Sister of Ivan VI., 36.

CHAPTER II.

WAR WITH SWEDEN AND TURKEY, AND THE MEETING AT ERFURT.

Gustavus IV., 37. The Russian Army Enters Finland, 40. Spanish Affairs, 42. French Evasions of the Treaty of Tilsit, 46. Caulaincourt, 46. A Gay Winter, 47. Death of the Infant Grand Duchess, 48. Madame Narishkin, 49. The Empress, 50. Humiliation of Germany, 55. Alexander and Napoleon at Erfurt, 59. Visit of the King and Queen of Prussia to Russia, 74. Alexander Annexes Finland to Russia, 76. The Austrian War, 83. Napoleon's Divorce, 88. Alexander and Czartoriski, 89. Poland, 97.

CHAPTER III.

PREPARATIONS FOR WAR BETWEEN FRANCE AND RUSSIA.

The New Council of State, 100. Wallachia and Moldavia, 106. Napoleon's Aggressions, 112. Letters, 113. Napoleon's Reasons

for the War, 115. Alexander thrown from his Horse, 125. Tchichagof, 128. Treaty of Bucharest, 132. The Plague at Odessa, 133. Speranski's Disgrace, 136. Letters on Poland, 141. Wellington, 148. Napoleon at Dresden, 150. Narbonne's Report, 152. Strength of Europe arrayed against Russia, 152.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FRENCH CAMPAIGN IN RUSSIA.

Alexander at Vilna, 155. The French Cross the Niemen, 157. Alexander's last Letter to Napoleon, 158. The Russian Army, 159. French want of Forage, 162. Alexander visits Moscow, 166. Enthusiasm of its People, 167. Peace with England, 170. Alexander goes to Abo, 170. Kutuzov, 172. Affairs of Turkey, 180. England thwarts the Russian Scheme for a Diversion in Italy, 181. Alexander refuses to dismiss Romanzov, 185. The Grand Duke Nicholas, 187. Madame de Staël, 188. Battle of Borodino, 191. Moscow burnt by its Inhabitants, 199. Receipt of the News in St. Petersburg, 201. Letters from Alexander and Kutuzov, 201. The Empress-Mother, 207. Russian Successes, 210. Napoleon's Letter to Alexander, 211. Kutuzov's Policy, 214. The French leave Moscow, 218. Disorders there, 219. Rostopchine, 219. Effects of the Burning of Moscow, 221.

CHAPTER V.

THE FRENCH RETREAT AND THE RUSSIAN PURSUIT.

Alexander's Plan for the Campaign, 222. War with Persia, 224. State of Poland, 225. The Russians compel the French to retreat by their old Route, 227. Battle of Viazma, 226. Famine in the French Army, 227. Their Losses falsely attributed to the Cold, 227. Battle of Krasnoe, 229. The Passage of the Beresina, 231. Napoleon Leaves his Army, 232. Its Sufferings, 235. Alexander arrives at Vilna, 237. His Kindness to the Sick and Wounded, 238. Death of his Brother-in-Law, 238. He crosses the Niemen, 240. Yorck's Convention, 241. Warsaw Capitulates, 243. The Russian Progress in Germany, 245. Alexander's Proclamation, 245. The Treaty of Kalisch, 247. Letters from Alexander and Czartoriski, 249. The Poles, 250. Bernadotte's Insincerity to the Allies, 254. Alexander enters Dresden, 258. Battle of Lutzen, 261. Bautzen, 265. An Armistice, 265.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CAMPAIGNS OF DRESDEN AND LEIPSIK.

Agreement between England, Russia, and Prussia, 277. Alexander meets Francis, 277. The Congress of Prague, 278. Alexander's Religious Impressions, 281. Exaggerated Estimate of the Allied Strength, 287. Davoust, 289. Bernadotte, 289. Moreau, 290. Schwartzenberg, 292. Jomini, 295. Battle of Dresden, 299. Kulm, 304. Katzbach, 313. Alexander receives the Order of the Garter, 314. Czernichef takes Cassel, 315. Yermalof, 325. Napoleon's Flight, 329. Alexander maintains order in Leipsic, 331. His Courtesy, 331. The French cross the Rhine, 337. He Visits his Wife's Relations, 334. Crosses the Rhine, 345.

LIFE AND TIMES
OF
ALEXANDER I.,

EMPEROR OF ALL THE RUSSIAS.

CHAPTER I.

1807.

WAR WITH ENGLAND.

ÆTAT. 29.

THE pride of England is gratified by the common saying that during her long war with France she, with a population of fifteen millions, was opposed to the master of Europe; and many French historians go further, and call Napoleon the master of the world. But in reality he had no more influence in Russia during the time he was her ally, than England possessed in the dominions of Napoleon III. Russia was no more subservient to the French conqueror than England was to France during the Crimean war, and her press never lent its pens in those days to a fulsome adulation of its ally. The brothers of Napoleon were seated on the thrones of Holland, Naples, and Westphalia, the last kingdom being partly formed out of the ceded dominions of Prussia; and a gay young sailor speaking Corsican French, but not a word of German, was enthroned among the potentates of the Fatherland; but Alexander, if he had chosen, might have seated his brothers on the thrones of Sweden, Roumania, and Poland. The diplomatic correspondence between the two Eastern and Western Empires from the close of 1807 to 1812, was on the side of Russia a constant protest against the continual French evasions of the treaty of Tilsit; and on Napoleon's

side perpetual excuses and endeavours to soothe the growing irritation of his ally. Russia kept the promise she had rashly made, when she thought England would accept her mediation ; and on the utter refusal of the cabinet of Great Britain to entertain any terms of peace, she declared war. This necessitated a line of policy in common with the French Government, but otherwise Alexander pursued his own course, and refused to accept any officious suggestions on the internal control of his dominions. The conciliation was all on the side of France, who felt it of the utmost importance to keep Alexander in good temper and at peace, whilst she was embarrassed with the Spanish war ; but the independent attitude Russia preserved was most galling to Napoleon, who, while using the softest words, still evidently cherished great jealousy of the only sovereign on the Continent whom he had not subdued. He wished to make France the supreme authority in Europe ; but he could not effect this except "by driving back Russia," as he expressed it, "into Asia." Austerlitz and Friedland, his only real victories over the Russians, had cost him more than many a defeat. In both the Russians had retreated in good order, and halted within sight of the French, who were not in a condition to pursue them ; and he felt that he still had to prove his superiority to the empire of the Czar. At the same time the Russians burned to revenge those two battles ; and the nobility thought their sovereign demeaned himself by acknowledging a low-born Corsican as a brother monarch. This feeling was encouraged by the English agents and merchants in Russia, the last of whom suffered severely from the rupture of commercial intercourse between the two nations. The enormous price, and at last total deficiency of sugar and every other English colonial produce was felt by all classes, particularly the Russian nobles, whose tables were sumptuous in the extreme ; and the French emigrant nobility had influence in the society of St. Petersburg, which contained a curious variety of refugees from all parts of Europe, who could only repose in safety in England or under the strong wing of Russia. Those who urged peace, such as Budberg and Benningsen, foretold that it could not last a twelvemonth ; Russia had required time to collect her resources, and to suppress the rising hopes of the Poles, and

then the two nations would go to war again, and fight till one or the other was utterly crushed. When the French newspapers containing the false accounts of the fraternization of the French and Russian soldiers were received by the Russian army after Tilsit, the officers eagerly contradicted them; and the King of Prussia complained that Napoleon, as if to insult him, had also had the audacity to assert the same untruth in his presence. Everything combined from the very first to show that the peace could be nothing but a long truce.

Although Alexander admired the institutions of England and the character of the English, he maintained that France was Russia's natural ally. Circumstances had brought him into alliance with England, and the bad faith of an ephemeral French Government had brought him into opposition with France; but the French had no real interests which need clash with those of Russia, so long as each kept to her proper limits. She had no fleet, and more commerce on land than on sea, while Russia aspired to be a naval power and had a considerable maritime trade. But though Russia possessed an immense tract in Asia before England had owned a foot of land in the East, there were already shadows of the uneasiness in those quarters which might arise between the two nations. Alexander hoped to preserve his friendship with England, and it was a great disappointment to him in every point of view, when from her attitude during the Polish campaign he felt she no longer cared to retain it. At any rate, the Imperial policy, which in Russia descends from one reign to another, could not bind itself, he thought, to a country which seemed able to change its principles with its ministry, and by its constitutional form of government must always be swayed by the movable tide of feeling of the mass of its people. In allying himself to France, in her present strength, he hoped to obtain a permanent truce, which would enable him to develop the military and commercial capabilities of his subjects, as well as to continue his reforms. He tried to console the King of Prussia by telling him the French influence could not last; it was a wave passing over, and Germany would rise once more. His fit of jealousy of his ally having passed away, Frederick William still had faith in Alexander; but his loud complaints of Napoleon's treatment of

him reached the ears of the French commanders, and appear to have been disadvantageous to the cause of Prussia.

When Napoleon returned to Paris, he opened the session of the legislative body, August 17th, with a speech on his new alliance. "Since your last meeting," he said, "new wars, new triumphs, and new treaties of peace have changed the aspect of the political relations of Europe. The House of Brandenburg, the first to combine against our independence, is indebted for still being permitted to reign to the sincere friendship with which the powerful Emperor of the north has inspired me. Our new relations with Russia are founded upon the reciprocal respect of two great nations." The President of the Assembly, in an address on the same subject, said, "The two greatest sovereigns in Europe have met each other upon a raft."

A manifesto was published September 1st at St. Petersburg to announce the conclusion of peace with France. It stated that owing to the exertions made by the Russian troops and by all classes of the nation, the war was brought to such an issue that important acquisitions might have been obtained; but as this could only be at the expense of an ally, his majesty thought it beneath the dignity of the Russian Empire to accept them, and therefore contented himself with securing in some measure the frontier of Russia.

Alexander stopped at Mittau for a night on his way from Tilsit to St. Petersburg, to reassure Louis XVIII. of his continued goodwill, in spite of his alliance with Napoleon, and ordered two regiments to be left to protect the town on account of the near neighbourhood of the French garrison at Dantzic. Some of the Russian wounded who had straggled home after Friedland tried to speak to the Emperor at Mittau, but the military governor would not permit them; again they assembled outside a church door in Riga, through which they heard he was to pass; and an attempt being made to drive them away, one of them stepped forward and boldly represented their sufferings in the late campaign. They wished to serve the Emperor faithfully, and not augment his difficulties, and therefore endured all without complaint; but now returned to their own country, he could no longer profit by their ill-treatment. The soldier's firmness alarmed

the governor, and he was persuaded to retire. But the Emperor heard the story, went to the wounded, directed their immediate relief, "and the daring orator," writes Wilson, "has been rewarded instead of punished."*

It was rumoured there was an attempt to assassinate Alexander on his road home; but the details of such deeds, unless done very publicly, are seldom circulated in Russia, where Prince Kozlovski once remarked that everything is secret, but nothing really concealed. The Hamburg papers stated that "the Emperor Alexander had a narrow escape lately, and according to information from Russia, had been saved from imminent danger through the intrepidity of the Grand Duke Constantine." Such a consummation was universally expected. "If Alexander shuts his ports against the English," writes Jackson, "the threat hinted to him by his brother in reminding him of the fate of Paul, might be realized, though from a different cause. I would lay any wager the Emperor would survive such a step no longer than would be necessary to make the country feel what a sufferer she would be by it." Wilson goes still further, and says he did not meet a Russian at Tilsit who did not fervently hope for such a catastrophe, and was not ready to aid in it!

Mr. Ross (private secretary to Mr. Canning) wrote to Lord Malmesbury, August 22nd, 1807, "Mr. Canning saw a letter from Prince Czartoriski yesterday. The Empress-mother is in a great fright, lest the public should suppose from her love of peace that she had any influence in bringing it about. The reigning Empress told the Emperor Alexander she should only make one observation on it. 'You are young, and you will have time to repent of this.' Czartoriski, Novossilzof, and Strogonof, with two others, have resigned their office as senators, though without incurring the displeasure of his Imperial Majesty. Czartoriski writes, that his heart has not changed, though he has lost his head. I hope we shall use all

* Wilson's Campaign of 1806-7. A similar occurrence happened in 1801, when a ragged, half-starved man forced his way on to the parade ground where Alexander was reviewing the troops, and striking him on the shoulder, said, "Alexander Paulovitz, I must speak to you." The Emperor took him aside, and heard his story. He had served under Suvorov in Italy, and had been misrepresented to Paul, who dismissed him from the service. Alexander restored him to his rank (he was an officer), and pensioned him.

the means Alexander will allow us to use, rather to soften than irritate his feelings. Gentleness may win him back to us in a few months."

On August 8th and 9th, a Russian Colonel and French Commissioner arrived at Corfu, and the Colonel read a despatch from the Emperor Alexander, in which he renounced his rights as Protector of the Seven Islands, and ceded them to Napoleon. The Russian garrison embarked to return to Russia by Italy and Germany, having been requested by the Commissioner to remain for a few weeks, in case of an attack from Malta. In the following December, Napoleon met these Russians on his road from Venice to Milan, as they were encamped near Verona, en route for the Austrian territory. The sight of them revived painful recollections of the last time he had seen their uniform on the field of battle, and he became unusually angry and excited, inquiring why they stayed in Italy, and ordering they should be told instantly to continue their march. The Russian officer explained that he was following the route assigned him, for which provision had been made by the Commissioners. Napoleon became more irritated, insisting on their immediate departure, and rudely exclaimed to his aides-de-camp, "Get rid of these barbarians for me." His commands being given to the Russian Colonel, he replied, "He was acting under the orders of his Emperor, and responsible to no other power; he would not stir from his ground before the hour appointed, and if attacked he should defend himself." Napoleon at last thought it prudent to leave them alone. He wrote to his brother Joseph that he knew nothing about Corfu. "In general (St. Cloud, Sept. 6th, 1807) I wish you to interfere as little as possible with the constitution of the country, and to treat the inhabitants well. The Emperor Alexander, who gave them their constitution, thinks it very good."

Napoleon had not the slightest intention of conforming to the article of the treaty of Tilsit binding him to offer Corfu and the adjacent isles as an indemnity to the ex-King of Naples; and his only fear now was lest they should be wrested from him by the English, who firmly maintained their footing in Sicily and Malta. He thought of assembling a new fleet there, and making it the basis of his operations against the

English possessions in the Mediterranean, and the conquest of Albania and Greece. He wrote to Marmont (Aug. 24th, 1807), "that the loss of Corfu would be the greatest misfortune which could befall the Empire."

General Count Tolstoi, the brother of the Inspector-General of the Russian army in the late campaign, and a strong advocate for the peace of Tilsit, was sent as Alexander's new Ambassador to Paris; and Savary was appointed Napoleon's representative at St. Petersburg, with private orders to establish a system of spies there in connection with the secret police of Paris. "I have just concluded peace," Napoleon said to him, when he furnished him with instructions; "they tell me I have done wrong, and that I shall repent it, but we have had enough of war. I am going to send you to St. Petersburg as *Chargé d'Affaires*, till an ambassador is appointed; lay it down as a ruling principle of your conduct, that any further contest is to be avoided. Nothing would displease me so much as to be involved in that quarter in fresh embarrassments. Talleyrand will tell you what has been arranged between the Emperor of Russia and me. I am about to give repose to my army in the country we have conquered, and to enforce payment of the contributions; that is the only difficulty I anticipate. But regulate yourself by this principle, that *I will on no account be again drawn into a contest*. Never speak of war; in conversation studiously avoid everything which may give offence; contravene no usage; ridicule no custom. Neglect nothing which may draw closer and perpetuate the bonds of alliance now contracted with that country."*

Savary's mission began very inauspiciously, and if the arrogance which prosperity had engendered made him imagine that his master's superiority was a recognized fact in all Europe, this faith was doomed to sustain severe shocks in Russia. He tried to pass the frontier, July 16th, without a passport, and was not permitted to proceed. He said he was "a General of France, a Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, a Grand

* It has been erroneously stated that Napoleon sent Savary to Russia to insult Alexander, as he had been the chief in the assassination of the Duc d'Enghien. On the contrary, he thought it would be an agreeable appointment to Alexander, who had received him so graciously before Austerlitz, and Savary was also his Director of the Secret Police.

Seigneur charged with an important mission from the Emperor Napoleon," and that "this was a sufficient passport." The officials answered, that Alexander, not Napoleon, commanded them, and the General of France should not set foot in Russia. At length Savary was obliged to send a messenger back to Memel to obtain one from the Russian Consul, who sent it, but in his letter approved of the official's conduct.

On arriving at St. Petersburg, Savary says he was filled with admiration on finding himself in so beautiful a city, but astonished to learn that his officers could not find him any lodgings, or even accommodation for themselves. This feeling against the French was partly owing to their cruel practices in the late war, and the repugnance felt by the Russian aristocrats for the servants of a parvenu Emperor. It was led by the two Empresses, and the Empress-Dowager especially lost no opportunity of showing her opposition to the present policy of her son. Alexander took no trouble to combat this feeling; he consoled Savary by telling him it would wear off, and often invited him to the palace; but the receptions and dinners were short, for the Emperor spent his evenings over business with his ministers, and Savary saw the other guests depart to balls and private concerts every night at each other's houses; yet for the first six weeks no one noticed him, and he was obliged to return from the Imperial table to the loneliness of his own apartments. He was indebted to the proprietor of the Hôtel de Londres in St. Petersburg, being a Frenchman and a native of the district where he was born, for obtaining any rooms at all. The Empress-Dowager generally concentrated in her own palace the gaieties of the Court of St. Petersburg; but she lived in retirement this autumn on account of the death of her mother, the Dowager-Duchess of Würtemberg (June 7th, 1807), which prevented the necessity of asking Savary with the rest of the diplomatic corps, or pointedly omitting him from her circle. On Sept. 5th the Imperial Guard returned to St. Petersburg, and the Emperor invited Savary to accompany him when he met them at the entrance of the city. The French envoy saw his rival, the British Ambassador, surrounded by the most distinguished of the nobility in front of the Senate house, who afterwards entertained him at a dinner, where Savary learned that speeches were made and toasts were drunk of a

nature most hostile to France. The two reigning beauties of St. Petersburg, Madame Narishkin and the Princess Galitzin, whose drawing-rooms were thronged with an admiring crowd, obliged him to call in vain four and five times at their houses before they would give him an audience, and then received him almost with contempt; and at a ball at the Princess Balagansky's, the Princess Amelia of Baden (the reigning Empress's sister) danced with every Englishman in the room, but never appeared to see that Savary was there, although he was conspicuous from wearing a plain dress when every one else was in uniform. These repeated slights were too much for him, and he requested Napoleon to replace him by some one more able to further the French interests. Napoleon desired him to persevere; he made "no doubt they should in time bring round all the great Russian lords to the French policy." On Sept. 28th he wrote to say he was expecting Alexander's ambassador, M. Tolstoi, "and shall receive him as the friend of the Emperor of Russia. It is not my custom to receive ambassadors and ministers, but it is necessary to act a little out of rule to do what is agreeable to the Emperor." He encloses two unsealed letters for the Empress. Savary is to read them and judge if they would be acceptable and would be answered; if so he is to seal them and deliver them, if not he is to keep them back. Again he writes to Savary's successor, Dec. 7th, 1807, "that his principal wish is to make his own interests agree with those of the Emperor of Russia."*

If Savary did not succeed in making himself popular with the Russian nobility, he contrived, by bribery and by means of the French and the Polish sub-officials in the Russian service, to establish a very complete system of spies not only in St. Petersburg but in the Emperor's palace. He also obtained possession of many letters from persons resident in France. He says† that the murder of the Emperor Paul six years before was still the subject of general conversation in the Russian capital, perhaps recalled to memory by the approach of another war with Great Britain. He heard the details of that tragedy from a Russian of high rank and a friend of Paul. "I was struck by the facility with which the

* Correspondance de Napoléon I^{er}. † Savary's Memoirs, iii.

conspirators had planned and executed their enterprise. The more I reflected the more I thought I perceived, from all I heard and saw, the first elements of a similar conspiracy. Marshal Soult seized a correspondence on the banks of the Vistula, among which were many letters filled with enigmatical phrases, occupied from end to end with the same subject. 'Have you no more P.'s, Pl.'s, N.'s, B.'s, nor V.'s among you?' written from Prussia to people in Russia. I told all this to the Emperor. He evinced the most perfect indifference, and said to me, 'I do not believe they dare,' alluding to such as might have entertained the supposed idea. 'I rely on the attachment of my subjects. If, however, they are determined, let them do it. I shall yield to them in no respect. But we must not believe all that is said in this country, the people talk a great deal, but they are not wicked for all that.' "I felt relieved," adds Savary, "from a load of anxiety when I saw the despatch Marshal Soult had sent me in the Emperor's hands. Though far from being satisfied as to the spirit which prevailed, and of which I could myself judge, I did not venture to complain because the Emperor did not do all that could be done with respect to it. Public opinion is not easily changed in a city like St. Petersburg. Violence would have spoiled everything."*

"In the beginning of November I communicated to Alexander several printed papers containing expressions of the most virulent kind against him. These were recent productions. He soon discovered the person who secretly hawked them about, and the channel through which they had been introduced into Russia. He was less offended at the insult offered to himself than indignant at discovering that it was a Russian attached to his household who had given currency to the libels. He sent for him, and seriously reproved him, but let him go unpunished." In Sept. 1807, Alexander went to inspect the new levies and stores he had collected on the frontier of Poland,

* One of Napoleon's chamberlains and a M. Berthier were both arrested and imprisoned for years, and several ladies exiled from Paris, for having spoken disrespectfully of Napoleon in some of the letters which Savary seized in Russia. It has been erroneously stated that they were seized by Prince Kurakin. Alexander was greatly amazed when years afterwards he heard of this occurrence; and nothing would induce him to see Savary when he was in Paris in 1814.

where his army was to spend the winter, "and though the weather was very bad," writes Savary, "he performed the journey with inconceivable rapidity." In his absence the envoy received an invitation to dine with the Empress. Her sister the Princess Amelia, Count Romanzov, and Count Victor Kotchoubey were present. The Princess talked almost incessantly of France and French literature and of Paris, which it was her great wish to visit. On a previous occasion, when the Emperor was at home, Savary dined at the palace, and was vexed to find she had read and believed many of the slanderous publications current with regard to the new French Empire, but he flattered himself that he completely changed her views. At the very time of the signature of the treaty of Tilsit, England sent a tardy subsidy to Russia of 100,000*l.*, with directions to Lord Leveson-Gower to inform Alexander it was forwarded to him on condition that he would continue the war. The money was sent by way of Gothenburg and Stockholm to St. Petersburg; but the King intercepted it for a fancied claim against Russia, and when the Russian minister at Stockholm remonstrated, he undertook to acquaint the Emperor with his reasons for it. As it was sent too late, Alexander when apprized that it was coming gave orders that it should be civilly returned, but he received the account of its abstraction in silence, and declined for the present to demand an explanation, as a despatch had just been sent to Gustavus to propose that Sweden should join the bond between Russia and France.

In September, 1807, Louis XVIII. quietly left Mittau with his two nephews, and accepting an invitation from Queen Charlotte, passed through Sweden and landed in England. He did not inform Alexander till he was actually gone, and then wrote to thank him for his hospitality, of which he should avail himself no more. His wife and niece, the Duchess d'Angoulême, followed him a few months later, and established themselves in Surrey; but they were obliged to drop their regal titles while they lived in England, though George III. had never acknowledged Napoleon as Emperor of the French. The mode of Louis's departure was discourteous if not distrustful towards the Czar, who had stated that no alliance should disturb these unfortunate exiles; but they remembered Louis being turned out of Russia at Napoleon's request during the

reign of Paul, and also felt some apprehension from Napoleon's garrison at Dantzic. The French emigrant nobility established in Russia stayed there till 1814, though several quitted the Russian service, as they felt it impossible to preserve their position towards their legitimate King if they remained where they might be called upon to act in co-operation with the agents of the usurping Emperor. Among these was Count Pozzo di Borgo, who had served Russia in a diplomatic capacity since 1803. A friend of Paoli, he had never forgiven Napoleon for deserting the patriot's cause, and when Russia allied herself to the French Empire, he tendered his resignation, which Alexander was most unwilling to accept. He gave his reasons. "Far from being of any use to you, Sire, I should only be an embarrassment. Napoleon has not forgotten the hatred of his early days; a time will come when he will demand that I shall be given up to him. Your Majesty is too generous to accede to such a request, but I should become a cause of misunderstanding between you, which it is my duty to avoid. After all, I have great doubts if this friendship between your Majesty and Napoleon can last. You will find that no conquests can satisfy his ambition. You have Persia and Turkey on your hands, France on your breast. Well clear your hands first, and a violent effort will extricate you. In the mean time I remain always devoted to you, and I foresee not many years will elapse before you will graciously deign to recall me." He retired to Vienna, but when Austria became merely a French dependency, he left for Constantinople, and for some time travelled in Syria. In October, 1810, he came to London, where he was attached to the Russian Embassy in 1812.

Benningesen was superseded in his command of the army in August, 1807, ostensibly on account of his health, but was replaced by his rival Buxhowden, though in St. Petersburg he was fêted as the conqueror at Eylau and Pultusk. Baron Budberg resigned September 29th, and was succeeded by Count Romanzov,* a warm partizan of the French alliance. Czartoriski, Novossilzof, and Strogonof also retired from office "in a very pointed manner," says Jackson, and were equally unreserved in their criticism of

* He was the son of the celebrated Marshal Romanzov, a descendant of Peter the Great.

the treaty of Tilsit, though they continued to attend the Court on public occasions, and Stroganof received the Order of St. George for his services with the Cossacks. Yet in 1812 Jackson says they were in some measure the cause of this treaty.* Czartoriski was thoroughly disappointed with the result of his policy, which, far from improving the condition of Poland, left it more unfortunate than before. He had no hope that Napoleon would use her otherwise than as a tool for his own purposes; and even the most ardent among the Poles began to see that they had been cruelly deceived by their own over-sanguine expectations. There was so much discontent that three corps of the French army were immediately sent to Warsaw to preserve order. They had expended their blood for the French early in the late campaign; yet when they asked Davoust for a supply of arms, and he referred the request to Napoleon, they received for answer, in a letter to Murat, "Tell the Poles that it is not with such personal precautions they can free their country, which has fallen under a foreign yoke; it is by rising altogether, bluntly without any reserve, and with the resolution of sacrificing fortune and life, that they can have not the certainty but only the hope of delivering it. I am not come here to beg a throne for my family. I am come for the interest of European equilibrium, to attempt one of the most difficult undertakings, from which the Poles have more than any others to expect, because it treats of their national existence as well as of the interests of Europe at the same time. If by great devotion they support me enough to succeed, I will grant them their independence. If not, I will do nothing, but leave them under their Prussian and Russian masters." They were rewarded for their services, which were very great, by the whole of Prussian Poland being offered to Russia. Yet nothing shows more plainly the confidence Napoleon felt in Alexander's benevolence than a proposal to deliver up without conditions a people who had raised an insurrection on his own behalf to a country which they esteemed as their chief enemy. "The treaty of Tilsit," says Oginski, "spread consternation through all the Polish provinces. Numbers in Lithuania and Volhynia

* See the Bath Archives. He says their conduct showed there that they had no tenacity of purpose.

had left their homes to join the army raised under the auspices of Napoleon, and knew their safety was compromised. Those who waited only for his passage of the Niemen to declare themselves were disappointed. Universally the treaty was regarded as the tomb of all their hopes."* Alexander's refusal to accept Prussian Poland was a blow to Czartoriski. The object of his policy for years would have been in great part accomplished, and one limb at least united to the trunk, and diplomacy might soon have added the rest. It was a chivalrous sentiment with regard to not availing himself of the misfortunes of an ally, which a Russian Emperor ought never to entertain; a departure from his early promises, and a lost opportunity of preventing for ever the entire restoration of Prussia, whom Czartoriski especially hated as the originator of the partition of Poland. He who had urged Alexander to gratify the French Emperor, and meet him after Austerlitz, could have had no real prejudice to overcome when he saw his sovereign shake hands with the Corsican usurper. It was only as affecting Poland that he blamed the treaty of Tilsit.

When Alexander was deserted in this manner by most of his councillors, who advocated an alliance with England, it naturally followed that the hope of preserving it became weaker, as his ministers were now exclusively friends to France. Yet for several weeks he deluded himself with the belief that England might still accept his proffered mediation. Peace was offered her with the restoration of Hanover in exchange for all the French colonies she had captured since 1805; and she was to recognize the present state of the Continent to permit her ally the ex-King of Naples to content himself with the Seven Islands and Sicily, and to agree that the flags of all nations should enjoy a perfect equality on every sea. He sent Count Romanzov to London from Tilsit to make this proposal, and Mr. Canning, the Prince of Wales, and the majority of the British nation were decidedly in favour of it, but nothing could overcome the repugnance of the aged George III. to conclude any truce with Imperial France. A motive was given for declining the mediation by the report conveyed at the very earliest moment to the British Cabinet, that secret articles had been signed at Tilsit of a nature hostile

* Oginski's *Mémoires sur la Pologne*.

to the English interests; and these were required to be produced. Budberg only answered by a statement of the complaints Russia had to make against England, especially the refusal of any assistance at a moment when the contest was equally balanced after inducing her to sustain the war by holding out delusive hopes of an auxiliary force. At this critical moment the news arrived of the landing of British troops in Zealand, and a demand that the Danish fleet should be given up to England lest it should be seized by France. The Prince Royal of Denmark, the nephew of George III., who ruled the kingdom for his father, Christian VII., naturally enough resisted such a demand. "No example," he exclaimed, "is to be found in history of so odious an aggression; more honour may now be expected from the pirates of Barbary than the English Government. You offer us your alliance. What is it worth? Your allies vainly expected your succours for an entire year."* Owing to this refusal Copenhagen was ruthlessly bombarded by the English fleet for three days and three nights, during which time 1800 houses and the cathedral were burned, whole streets were razed to the ground, and 1500 of the inhabitants perished. The Danes, hoping to save the rest from total destruction, sent a flag of truce to the British outposts, and offered to capitulate; and, after an occupation of about five weeks, when English soldiers were even quartered in the King's palace, the British expedition returned to England with the whole Danish fleet, except five vessels, which were destroyed as not worth the removal, and an amount of prize money estimated at 960,000*l.* sterling, all captured from a neutral power whom they had taken by surprise, without even declaring war.

Much has been written to defend this arbitrary act on the score of forestalling danger to Great Britain herself; but if it was justifiable, the conquest of Finland, the annexation of Moldavia and Wallachia, or even of Constantinople in a time of peace, on the ground that they might be made the seat of French intrigue against Russia, as they have been before; the

* Even so late as the 22nd of May, when Lord Hutchinson had been furnished with a subsidy for the Prussian Government, he refused to lend a portion of it to defray the immediate necessities of the Russian army who, owing to the unusual length of the winter, could not obtain supplies from their own country.

partition of Poland, lest it should fall into the hands of a hostile State ; the battle of Sinope, or, in fact, the seizure of any weak Power by a strong neighbour, because being unable to preserve its own rights it might be made the point of aggression by an enemy, would be all equally defensible ; and by asserting the superiority of might over right, it at once deprived England of any logical reason for condemning the provisions of the treaty of Tilsit, or any other of the subsequent proceedings of Russia and France. Henceforward her anxiety to continue the war was certainly regarded by Alexander as being only influenced by a desire not to admit the flags of other nations to an equality with her own on the seas, and an objection to acknowledge a soldier of fortune as a brother potentate of her King, motives which he thought were not enough to weigh against the conclusion of a general peace.

He was astonished and much concerned when he heard the news of the catastrophe, and protested against it as an uncalled-for violation of the law of nations. Lord Leveson-Gower had been at Memel during the meeting at Tilsit, but was now accredited to St. Petersburg with instructions to offer the Emperor a subsidy if he would draw back from his new alliance and continue the war. He answered the remonstrance by stating that the expedition was a consequence of his Cabinet having received information of the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit, by one of which the Danish fleet was destined to assist in making a descent on the shores of Great Britain. Now, as the English fleet received its orders to sail for Copenhagen as early as July 19th, and its destination was commented on in the newspapers several days beforehand, the treaty of Tilsit was obviously *not* the exciting cause, as the details could not possibly have reached London ; but it appeared that information was conveyed to the British Cabinet of a scheme Napoleon had discussed immediately after the battle of Friedland for uniting all the fleets of Europe in an attack upon Great Britain if he succeeded in making peace with Russia, and they acted at once on this slight hint. The inaccuracy was to be regretted, as it cast an additional doubt on the good faith of Great Britain, and the Russians were only too much inclined to accuse her of holding back from a campaign which

involved danger, and being ready enough to fight in a bombardment where there could be little peril and a considerable amount of booty. Alexander's sincerity has been doubted on this occasion,* owing to a conversation being somewhat altered by transmission through three people, all anxious to preserve peace between England and Russia; but this has been cleared up by the more recent publication of their correspondence. Other charges brought against the good faith of this Prince by superficial writers might be explained in the same way when the incidents themselves are not pure invention, which is sometimes the case. Sir Robert Wilson went to St. Petersburg from Memel in August, where he had a conversation with the Emperor, and also with several Russians, who, anxious to avert the catastrophe of a war with England, impressed upon him that Alexander was as if under Napoleon's spell, but in his secret heart preferred the English alliance, and would gladly keep up his friendly relations with Great Britain. Wilson left for London Sept. 2nd, and Copenhagen capitulated on the 5th, so that when he had last seen the Emperor (the day he quitted St. Petersburg) they had only received intelligence of the landing of the British troops in Zealand, and were not aware that it would end in anything more than a peaceful occupation, which might be a protection rather than otherwise to Denmark. Wilson was sent back to St. Petersburg with English despatches, and on his road passed through Sweden, where he told M. Alopeus, the Russian ambassador, that he inferred from the conversation he held with the Emperor before he quitted Russia, Sept. 2nd, that he would not be averse to the English troops remaining in Zealand. M. Alopeus wrote to Count Romanzov that Wilson had told him the Emperor wished the English to remain in Zealand. Count Romanzov repeated this, expressing some surprise under the circumstances, and the person to whom he said it told it to Savary with the addition that the Emperor had expressed a very strong wish on the subject. Count Romanzov told Wilson, when he saw him the following Oct. 29th, that the Emperor had felt some uneasiness on this matter, being conscious that he had never expressed himself in such terms, but on receiving Sir Robert's explanation, he said, "it was amply sufficient, and

* Sir W. Scott's *Life of Napoleon*. Also Alison.

he would regard the representation of M. Alopeus as the misunderstanding of an inference for a fact.”* The bombardment of Copenhagen certainly precipitated hostilities between Russia and England, which Alexander had been able to defer beyond the stipulated period, as Napoleon had not yet fulfilled his part of the agreement. He wrote to the French Emperor (Aug. 14th, 1807) to complain of the delay in evacuating the Prussian States, and of the heavy contributions imposed upon them.† But when Napoleon heard of the success of the attack on Denmark, “he was more enraged,” says Fouché, “than I have ever seen him since the catastrophe of Paul.” He wrote immediately to Savary, and told him he must insist on Alexander immediately fulfilling that article of the treaty by which he agreed to suspend friendly relations with Great Britain, and to threaten, in case of a refusal, the continued occupation of Prussia. Lord Leveson-Gower calls Savary’s instructions “a peremptory demand,”‡ but in obedience to Napoleon’s orders to act in the most conciliatory spirit, the French minister did not show his master’s letter to Alexander, but gently reminded him of the existence of the secret article, and Napoleon’s desire that it should be carried into effect. “‘Very well,’ said Alexander, ‘I have given him my word that I would do so; see Romanzov, and return to speak with me on the subject.’ The day following I returned. I represented that the mediation to be proposed by Russia had already taken place, and that England had refused it. He thought a moment, and then said, ‘I understand you, and am quite disposed to fulfil my engagements. I will to-day give orders to Romanzov.’ Two days afterwards the hostile note against England was issued, and the British ambassador demanded his passports. Having gained so much, though well aware that Napoleon’s principal object was to strike at the English commerce, I deemed it expedient to shut my eyes to the time given to the British vessels to clear out of the Russian harbours.”

* Sir Robert Wilson’s Life and Correspondence.

† Sir R. Adair’s Correspondence.

‡ Some one must have acted as eavesdropper at Tilsit to secure such early information of the Secret Articles, as they were not all written down, but only verbal. The internal walls of the edifices in which the Emperors resided were not very solid; and as Alexander was deaf, and Napoleon at

If Alexander was placed in difficulties by being called upon to fulfil his part of the treaty, Napoleon was equally so with regard to his. When he offered his mediation to Turkey in her war with Russia, she at once accepted it, and an armistice was concluded, which did not, as the Turks expected, lead to an evacuation of Moldavia and Wallachia. Napoleon told Alexander at Tilsit this would not be necessary, so the Russian army had orders to remain; but the Turks declared they should not have been in a worse position if the French army, instead of being victorious, as the French ambassador had led them to suppose, had been driven out of Poland. "Is this the Emperor's care for his allies whom he has drawn into the conflict, to leave their richest provinces in the hands of their enemies?" At the same time Napoleon sent the earliest information of the article of the treaty respecting the partition of Turkey to his minister Sebastiani, telling him that Russia was to have Moldavia, Wallachia, and all Bulgaria, as far as the left bank of the Hebrus; Servia was to be allied to Austria, and Bosnia, Albania, Epirus, the Peloponnesus, Attica, and Thessaly to France. Sebastiani was to draw up a memorial as quickly as possible with regard to the resources of these provinces, and their exact geographical boundaries. Only six months had passed since Napoleon had written to Marmont to "spare no protestations or assistance to Turkey, for she was the faithful ally of France;" and now the same general was told to prepare the natives of the provinces to be annexed by France for this important change in their government. Who could say that the Russian campaigns of Eylau and Friedland had been unsuccessful, since they had caused Napoleon to abandon his idea of raising Poland, and to reverse his policy with regard to Turkey; to give up the two most staunch allies he possessed?

As Count Guilleminot, the French envoy who took Napoleon's instructions from Tilsit to Constantinople, also carried Alexander's orders to General Michelsen on the Danube, there is no doubt that Napoleon knew and approved of the sub-

all times had a loud-toned voice, whatever he said within either of their rooms, might have been easily heard from behind the door. A rebuke he gave to Murat, with regard to his fantastic dress, was spread abroad, though they supposed themselves to be alone.

stance of them, and they were distinctly framed that the Russian army should remain in its present quarters in the Principalities, and attempt no further active operations for the present. But when the Turks declared to Sebastiani that rather than leave Moldavia and Wallachia in the possession of Russia they would continue the war, which would also involve one with France, who was not yet prepared for it, Napoleon tried to draw out of the complication by his usual refuge in diplomacy—a disregard of his pledged word; and desired Savary to insist in the *mildest possible manner*, but still to insist, on the evacuation of these two provinces by the Russian troops. He also wrote to Alexander on the same subject from Paris, Sept. 17th, 1807, saying that he was no party to the drawing-up of the armistice with the Porte, and disapproved of it (which implied a tacit assent to the occupation of the Danubian provinces); and as to the maintenance or division of the Ottoman Empire, it was a question so serious and important, both for the present and the future, that he must think it over ripely; that he could not discuss it in writing, and must weigh it in all its depths with M. Tolstoi: he reserved it for discussion with that ambassador, and, indeed, it was in order to have a conference with him that he had postponed his departure for Italy, where he was so anxious to be. “Let us be united,” he added, “and we will accomplish the greatest deeds of modern times.” Yet, on the 12th of January, 1808, he ordered Champagny to put the following questions to Sebastiani:—“If the Russians will keep Wallachia and Moldavia, is the Porte inclined to join France in the war? What are her means of war, &c.?” Napoleon’s despatches to Savary, dated Fontainebleau, Oct. 14th, 1807, desired him to inquire the cause of the delay in the evacuation of Moldavia and Wallachia, and to observe that peace could not be re-established between Russia and the Porte till it had taken place, as it was the condition which was to precede the armistice. Alexander replied, that he must conform to circumstances in this particular, and they had altered considerably since the treaty. “The latest advices,” he said, “from Vienna and Odessa state that the influence of France has declined at Constantinople; it is even said the English ambassador has disembarked from Lord Collingwood’s fleet in the Dardanelles. There is every pro-

bability that a treaty will be concluded between England and the Porte hostile to you, and therefore to me, and if I evacuated these provinces I should soon have to re-enter them to avert the war from my own frontiers. I must recur to what Napoleon said to me, not once, but ten times, at Tilsit, in respect to these provinces, and I have more confidence in these assurances than in all the reasons of expediency or policy which may subsequently appear to gainsay them. Why then renounce my present advantages when past experience tells me so clearly what will ensue if I evacuate these provinces? Even supposing that you have the upper hand at Constantinople, you can never prevent bands of insurgents from crossing the Danube and renewing the pillage of these provinces. The orders of the Porte are worth nothing a mile from Constantinople. In our conversations at Tilsit your Emperor often said he did not care about the evacuation; it might be indefinitely postponed; it was not possible any longer to tolerate the Turks in Europe, and I was at liberty to drive them into Asia. It was only on a subsequent occasion that he went back from his word so far as to speak of leaving the Turks Constantinople and some adjacent provinces."

Savary replied, that Russia could always renew the war if Alexander chose. Napoleon had too much confidence in the Emperor's honour to doubt the validity of his reasons, but still he desired to see all the articles carried out, and a peace between Russia and the Porte was all that prevented them from being executed. "We must conclude an armistice with the Turks before a treaty is concluded, or do you propose at once to write their epitaph? All that the Emperor Napoleon has said at Tilsit shall be religiously executed."

"Yesterday," continued Alexander, "I had a long interview with the Swedish ambassador, and strongly urged him to enter into the views of France, and represented the risk he would run in not making common cause with her and Russia; meanwhile the march of our troops continues; in seven or eight days the last division will have arrived, and we shall be ready to begin the war on the frontiers of Finland. When you asked for a declaration of war against England, I was well aware it was no trifling change of system which could be altered as soon as adopted. Had I supposed it to be such, I

should never have put my name to it ; but I viewed it in a more extended light. What was I required to do ? To prepare great events, which will cause the memory of mournful ones to be forgotten, and put the two States in such political relations as can never be disturbed. Impressed with these ideas, and within twenty-four hours, I did what you requested, although it was in no way conducive to our interests, but, on the contrary, exposed us to very serious losses. Now you insist that I should make war on Sweden. I am ready to do so, my armies are on her frontiers ; but what return are we to make for so many sacrifices ? Wallachia and Moldavia are the recompense the nation expects, and you wish to deprive us of them. What reply can we make to our people if, after their evacuation, they ask us what benefits are to compensate to them for the losses consequent on the war with England ?”*

In another conversation, Alexander told Savary that Napoleon had first proposed to him to take the Danubian provinces, and he had previously never suggested it. “ When he heard the news of Selim’s fall, he said to me, ‘ One can do nothing with these barbarians ; Providence absolves me from my engagements with them ; let us adjust matters at their expense.’ ” Napoleon and his ministers were the last people who could consistently plead a change in the head of the State as a reason for breaking an alliance, as they had all accepted the various alterations in the French administration ; first the monarchy of Louis XVI., then a constitutional government, various republican assemblies, and lastly the French Empire, and bowed to each without a thought of supporting that which preceded it. But as soon as these conversations were reported by Savary to Napoleon, he wrote to Alexander with another proposal (Dec. 22nd, 1807) : “ If there is to be a violation of the treaty of Tilsit, it must not be for the benefit of one only of the contracting parties ; it must take effect for France in a portion of the States of Prussia—of which this treaty stipulates the restoration—equivalent in population, resources, and riches to the two Turkish provinces. In this way the ally of France and the ally of Russia will be equal losers. Prussia, it is true, will then be left with little more than two million inhabitants,

* Savary’s Despatch to Napoleon, November 18th, 1807. Quoted by Alison, chap. li.

but this fresh weakening will be no great calamity for her. The final destruction of the Ottoman Empire should be postponed until her mighty fragments may be divided in the way most advantageous to us both, without risk of another power, hostile both to France and Russia, intervening to appropriate the richest spoils—Egypt and the isles.”*

Alexander repelled this proposal with disdain. “How,” he exclaimed, “can I consent to what will in reality be a sharing of the spoils of an unhappy Prince whom the Emperor took the credit of restoring out of consideration for me?” The controversy terminated in the Russians remaining in the Principalities, and Napoleon made it an excuse for prolonging his occupation of Silesia. The campaign on the Danube had comprised some brilliant successes, but deprived the army of Eylau and Friedland of several of the best Russian generals. Michelsen, who was adjutant-general at Austerlitz, and, like Benningsen, won his earliest laurels in subduing Pugachef’s rebellion, died of fever in Wallachia, in the summer of 1807: Miloradovitz gained the victory of Obilessisti in Wallachia, on the same day as the battle of Friedland, and Platof left the shores of the Niemen to join him with his Cossacks. On parting from him at Tilsit, Alexander told Platof that Napoleon had joined him in sending a message to the Turks threatening the march of their united forces if they did not in three weeks evacuate such provinces and islands as were claimed, and that the answer was expected within that time. He hoped they would comply without demurring, in which case Platof should return to the Don.† Such were the sanguine expectations Alexander was led to form by the conversations at Tilsit; but he had yet to learn that his late opponent never troubled himself to adhere to truth; though when so many older and more experienced men, including the leaders of the Liberal party in Great Britain, were misled by Napoleon’s plausible excuses, and believed him destined to regenerate the old rotten system of Europe, it is not surprising that an imaginative Prince, whose position debarred him from the ordinary opportunities of studying the varieties of human character, and who was subjected to all the arts which Napoleon could assume when he wished to please, should have fallen

* Bignon, vii. 43-44.

† Life of Sir Robert Wilson.

into the same snare, and thought their alliance might lead to a material advance in civilization and liberal institutions throughout the Continent.

Lord Leveson-Gower received instructions from the British Government, after Tilsit, to send for the English fleet from Copenhagen if he thought proper to act against Cronstadt and St. Petersburg before the winter set in; but as war was not declared on either side, he refrained, knowing it would entirely alienate the Russian nobles, who were still favourable to England. Budberg assured him that the peace of Tilsit was but a temporary measure, for all Europe must unite against Napoleon. Lord Leveson-Gower reminded him that if the French got into Sweden they would soon secure Finland, and then would be at the gates of St. Petersburg; certainly an unfortunate remark, as it must at once have struck his auditor that if at war with England, Finland ought to be immediately occupied, to prevent the arrival of far more dangerous neighbours, in English troops and gunboats combined, while the French, having no fleet, could not in any case advance further than the Baltic.

Wilson being very intimate with the leaders of the philo-Anglicans in Russia, laboured hard to counteract the result of the treaty of Tilsit during his visits to St. Petersburg in August and October, 1807, and was employed to bring a new proposal of alliance from the British Cabinet. "What a city!" he writes, as he first enters the Russian capital, "magnificent beyond description or imagination. It is, I am certain, unrivalled on the Continent or in the modern world for the grandeur of its buildings, an assemblage of palaces." His chief friends were Czartoriski, Novossilzof, and Nesselrode, all fated to gain different kinds of notoriety at a later day. The first two were connected by marriage, and at that time warm friends, but under another reign became the deadliest enemies. "One would not suppose that Siberia and arbitrary power existed within the boundaries of the Russian Empire, such bold language and such indignant sentiments at the late peace I never heard even in my own country when we made the disgraceful peace of Amiens." He was invited to dinner (Aug. 18th) at the Emperor's palace at Kameny Ostrov, on an island in the Neva. "I found Romanzov," he writes, "and soon

afterwards Count Tolstoi, Prince Galitzin, Prince Lapukhin, and one or two more of the chief ministers joined us." At a quarter past four he was ushered into the adjoining room, where he found the Emperor, who shook hands with him and presented him to the Empress, who received him "with most flattering expressions of her goodwill in consequence of all she had heard." After a few minutes' conversation they went into the dining-room, where the Sovereigns spoke to the guests and then sat down to dinner. Sir Robert occupied a seat next to the Emperor, and during the whole of the dinner, which was of the best quality, but did not last too long, they talked in as lively and uncereemonious a manner as at Barstenstein. The Empress also joined constantly in the conversation; but if formal state was banished from the society, all around denoted Imperial magnificence. The attendants, &c., were arrayed in courtly splendour, and some blacks dressed like those in the seraglio, who waited upon the Emperor and Empress, added greatly to the effect.

After dinner the Empress talked to Sir Robert for about a quarter of an hour under the colonnade in front of the dining-room, and as soon as she retired the Emperor came to him, and they had a rather longer conversation. "Alexander," he writes, "has a good and affectionate heart; I had frequent occasion to observe the honest agitation with which it beat when our discourse was directed to some incidents which vibrated on memory."* . . . "In his private character he is most amiable, extremely well read, and no man in his Empire knows the topography, character, &c., of his dominions and subjects better than himself. When at Barstenstein he good humouredly pointed out to his officers an article in a French newspaper, descriptive of the Russians, 'as if they were some novel species of the human kind from a recently discovered country.' 'You see,' he added, 'the French thought us wild beasts, and are surprised, after this Buffon analysis, to find that we are a class of the human species.'"[†]

On the night of Aug. 27th, Wilson witnessed a great fire in St. Petersburg, which the Emperor, according to custom, attended. A violent storm was raging, and several large houses

* Wilson's War in 1806-7.

† Life of General Sir Robert Wilson, and War in 1806-7.

were burned. Fires, he says, are rare in this country. De Maistre mentions one earlier, in 1803, in which a large asylum for the poor caught fire. Both the Emperor and Constantine personally aided in extinguishing it. From the site of the fire Wilson visited the Academy of Arts, "a noble establishment where 350 young people are instructed in painting, sculpture, &c., and maintained at the expense of the Crown, so well that none of our children in England are better clothed, fed, and taken care of. We were all greatly struck by the proofs of talent in several of the students. Too great praise cannot be given to this institution. It is the glory of the civilized countries of the world."

He complains much of Savary's "unparalleled falsehoods," and cannot understand his frequent interviews with the Emperor, afterwards explained by the dispute as to Moldavia and Wallachia then in progress. He paid a farewell visit to Budberg, whom he found dying, and left with despatches for England on Sept. 2nd; but was again in St. Petersburg by Oct. 19th with a new proposal. Alexander was visiting his army on the frontier of Poland, but in the interval Wilson received an assurance from the Empress-Dowager and the young Grand Duchess Catherine that they felt the greatest interest in his undertaking, and would do all in their power to promote its success.

Wilson knew Romanzov to be very anti-Anglican, but in the Emperor's absence he was obliged to see him. He told the minister that his Government considered the occupation of Zealand as a measure of security for Russia herself; that England never could think of making peace with France while there was no prospect of diminishing her continental preponderance. England was desirous of the military power of Russia being "augmented to the highest degree of which it was capable, whereas France was as anxious to reduce its present strength; and that at all events she never would agree to the aggrandizement of Russia without far greater advantages to herself; it was understood that Moldavia and Wallachia were provinces added to Russia in the event of France obtaining possession of important stations in Greece, which acquisitions would for ever destroy the influence of Russia there." He added, that "England never would *propose* the partition of Turkey,

but nevertheless if any arrangements could be made between Austria and Russia on the basis of occupying and exchanging these provinces, which arrangement would secure the sincere alliance of both countries, England never would make that a cause of quarrel which proved the bond of a union she desired so much to establish. The same principle of a liberal and friendly policy would induce England to protect the interests of Russia on the side of Greece, of which her present engagements obliged the abandonment, and if Russia would only with candour state her actual situation and the full extent of her connections with France, England would zealously apply all its power to extricate Russia from the embarrassments caused by the treaty of Tilsit. She sought no recompense; her reward was the restoration of confidence between two nations which should ever be united; and her further object the hope of finally relieving Europe from the oppression of France. But it was necessary for Russia to act with impartiality, and prove to France that she is an independent power, able and resolved to maintain that character.”*

But whatever Alexander's inclinations might have led him to do, he had given his word to Napoleon, and would not draw back from it. Lord Leveson-Gower, in a note to Mr. Canning, Nov. 4th, says that some members of the Imperial Council “consulted on the matter advised the Emperor not to reject so fair an opportunity of re-establishing the tranquillity of the north of Europe.” Wilson also writes, that “the spirit of the country was worthy of a great nation,” and that Savary acquired no partisans; but then came Napoleon's letter after the bombardment of Copenhagen, and on Nov. 8th, the declaration of war.

Wilson heard accidentally through his Russian acquaintances that war was to be declared with Great Britain and Sweden, and while the Russian Cabinet was still trying to avoid it with the Court of Stockholm, he left St. Petersburg and by great speed outstripped the Russian courier on his way to England and Sweden, and concerted a plan to detain him as soon as he should reach Stockholm. He therefore gave early information to the Swedish ministers, apparently accompanied with

* Life of Sir Robert Wilson. Appendix xx. He also informed his Government where Russia could be attacked with most effect.

strong advice to resist the demands of Russia and France, and induced the Governor of Gothenburg to lay an embargo on all ships for forty-eight hours to give him more time. The English Government at once despatched orders to secure the Sperknei frigate on its way to pay the Russian fleet as it came from the Archipelago to the Baltic, and it was captured in the Thames with all its money and stores. A British vessel was sent to direct Admiral Sir Sidney Smith to intercept the Russian fleet and conduct it to England; but owing to a delay, he missed it before it had reached the shelter of the Tagus, then closed against English ships. The day after these orders were sent from England, the Russian courier arrived with instructions to the Sperknei frigate to sail from London to the nearest port of safety, and the officials of the Russian Embassy were in the greatest consternation when they found it had already been seized. But on the part of Russia no war was ever inaugurated more gently, or with more consideration to those who were most concerned. No Englishman was detained, and no ships or goods were seized by the Government; a sufficient notice was given to enable English vessels to leave the harbours, and at the request of the committee who were appointed by the Government to liquidate all outstanding debts, two English merchants were added to their number, so that it was concluded to the satisfaction of all parties. The capture of a Russian vessel in the Adriatic with several members of the late Government of the Ionian Republic on board, by an English cruiser, at length induced Alexander to declare the British subjects residing in Russia as hostages for their safety, and to suspend all passports to Englishmen till they were released; but in the mean while the English mixed freely in society, and received more marks of attention from the Russians than the subjects of France. Every preparation was made to oppose the British fleet if it visited the Gulf of Finland; hulks were sunk to blockade the ports, and the gunners of Cronstadt were kept in full practice during the autumn of 1807; but the winter was too far advanced to make an impression in the Baltic when war was declared, and during subsequent years the British fleet was amply employed elsewhere. The war, however, paralyzed the Russian foreign trade. In 1807, the value of merchandize exported from St. Petersburg and Cronstadt was



28,915,545 roubles, and that of the imports amounted to 15,303,483. The number of foreign ships arriving at these ports in the same time was 851. The English were the chief purchasers of Russian produce, consisting largely of hemp, timber, tallow, and corn, and Napoleon imagined that when deprived of Russian hemp they would soon be unable to make use of their navy for want of rope. The trade might have been carried on by neutral vessels if Alexander had permitted it, for the French were powerless on the sea ; but he strictly kept to his part of the agreement with France, to the great discontent of the Russian nobles, who produced much larger crops on their estates than they could sell in Russia. Prussia and Germany could not buy, for their commerce was ruined by the war ; money was scarce, while the Russian barns overflowed, so that private as well as public interests added to their hatred of the French alliance.

The courteous manner in which Alexander went to war did not at all please Napoleon. He had hoped to see the English detained in Russia, as he had kept British subjects prisoners when the peace of Amiens was broken in 1802, and that their ships and goods might be seized, and a large number sent to Siberia. In Nov. 1807, he recalled Savary to Paris, and accredited Caulaincourt to the Court of St. Petersburg, at the same time giving him instructions about the English mercantile colony in St. Petersburg. This colony numbered several thousand people, and Caulaincourt was desired to intimate that it was always customary to banish from the capital the subjects of a nation with whom a Sovereign was at war. Alexander replied, " Their forefathers have been here a century, and I shall not ill-treat my old friends by acting towards them as foes. They are respectable and worthy people ; if they wish to remain, I will allow no one to molest them."

When the English Parliament assembled in March, 1808, Mr. Whitbread moved that, " It is the opinion of this House that the conditions stipulated by his Majesty's ministers for the acceptance of the mediation offered by the Emperor of Russia were inexpedient and impolitic. That this House feels itself forced to declare that there is nothing in the present circumstances of the war which ought to preclude his Majesty from

embracing any fair opportunity of acceding to, or commencing, a negotiation with the enemy on a footing of equality for the termination of hostilities on terms of justice and honour." Seventy voted with him on the first point, 210 against; and on the second point 58 with him, and 217 against.

In the Russian declaration of war against England, Oct. 30th, 1807, the Emperor spoke of the value he had attached to England's friendship, and his regret on seeing her entirely separate from him; for while he twice armed for a cause most directly hers, and asked not for a union of her troops with his, but only that they should effect a diversion, she coolly contemplated the sanguinary conflict she had originally kindled, and sent troops to attack Buenos Ayres; another of her armies stationed in Sicily for the apparent purpose of landing in Italy, was sent off instead to appropriate Egypt. But what touched him most was that, contrary to her good faith and the precise terms of treaties, she troubled the maritime trade of his subjects at a time when the blood of Russians was being shed in glorious campaigns which drew against them all the military forces of the French Emperor. When he made peace with France, he stipulated, in spite of his just resentment against England, that he should offer his mediation to George III. to obtain for him an honourable treaty. But the British ministry, consistently with its plan to break the bonds connecting Russia and England, at once refused it. The peace between Russia and France was to prepare a general peace. But England, anxious to perpetuate the flames of war, suddenly quitted her lethargy to cast new firebrands on the north of Europe. Her fleets and troops executed an unparalleled act of violence on the coasts of Denmark—a quiet and moderate power, whose wise policy had acquired a moral dignity among States, was assaulted as if she had been forging plots against England. The Emperor, wounded in his dignity, in the interests of his people, in his engagements with the Northern Courts, by this violent act in the Baltic, did not conceal his resentment. England made new proposals for Denmark's neutrality, to which he would not accede; but breaking off all communication with England, proclaims the principles of the armed neutrality, and annuls all treaties inconsistent with its spirit.



The system of privateering then permitted in England often degenerated into little less than piracy; and the captain of a frigate fitted out at his own expense, and carrying British colours, was not always very particular about the exact destination of a foreign merchantman which happened to sail across his path, if no lawful prey had lately come within his reach to reward him for his labour and cost. In this way the allies of Great Britain, as well as the neutrals, suffered severely in their commerce during the long French war; for the superiority of the navy of Great Britain over that of all other nations, prevented them from demanding any redress, except by such combinations as the armed neutrality of 1789 and 1801. Denmark was so far inclined towards an alliance with England, that Napoleon had proposed to the King of Sweden to deprive her of Norway, and give it to Sweden as a means of attracting him to join France. But now Denmark rejected all further offers from Great Britain of being allowed to remain neutral, and threw herself at once into the arms of France. What had her neutrality availed her, since it resulted in her capital being half destroyed? And even if she had acceded to Great Britain's demand, and allowed her to take peaceable possession of her fleet, it would undoubtedly have been considered a cause for war by Napoleon, and an excuse for sending an army of occupation into Denmark, compelling her to purchase her safety with a Danish contingent and a large indemnity.

Mr. Canning replied to Alexander's manifesto by accusing him of contracting trammels for himself, and tarnishing the glory of the Russian name, "in a moment of despondency and alarm." He said, the declaration of war proved the influence acquired over Russia "by the inveterate enemy of Great Britain exciting a causeless animosity between two nations whose long connection and mutual interests prescribed the most intimate union. He said that Russia had more cause in the late war to take up arms on behalf of Prussia than Great Britain, who was actually at war with that Power. The vindication of the Copenhagen expedition was already before the world, and Russia had it in her power at once to disprove the basis on which it is erected by producing the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit," &c.

Under date of Nov. 3rd, advices were published from St. Petersburg in the London papers, stating that "the old nobility had presented a strong remonstrance to the Emperor against the war with England, and also to Count Romanzov." The English newspapers announced, Dec. 1807, that Sweden was preparing for war with Russia.

The loss of English manufactured goods and colonial produce was so far beneficial to the Continent, that it taught her to rely on her own native fabrics, and when the war came to an end, the infant manufactures were protected by heavy duties, so that in Russia at least the amount imported after 1814 never rose to the same proportion as that taken by her markets before 1807. Sugar was extracted from beetroot; herrings, which used to be imported largely into Lithuania and Russia for their long fasts, were dispensed with; and tea brought overland was universally drunk by the upper classes to the exclusion of coffee, which in Catherine's reign had come much into use. This result seems never to have been foreseen by the English politicians, and it caused great discontent when the war came to an end, and Great Britain found herself heavily taxed to defray the cost, without receiving a proportionate benefit. The great difficulty in treating with Napoleon was, that he never acted like a man of honour, and only made engagements to evade them on the first pretext. But there is no doubt that if England had chosen to co-operate with the other Powers in a joint negotiation a satisfactory peace might have been arranged, and the moral pressure exercised would have been too great for him to have ventured to disturb it. His system was like that of the Tartars in the Middle Ages, to separate kingdoms in alliance, and then fall separately upon each, and to encourage internal dissensions in a State before he declared war.* His rudeness to ambassadors arose not from actual warmth of temper, but from never having lived in his youth in that rank of society where self-control forms a necessary part of education. "What a pity," said Talleyrand, "that such a great man should have been so ill brought up!" It was a triumph of democracy when a country, whose upper classes had boasted of being the most polished in the world, was ruled by a man who told a

* *Las Cases.*

lady* in public, "What shocking red hair you have got;" and when she curtsied and replied, "I may very possibly have red hair, but your Majesty is the first person who ever told me so," caused her to be banished to the distance of forty leagues from Paris. Wilson says, in 1807, that "the modern French diplomatists can be insolent with impunity, for no gentleman would sully his own honour by calling them out." It was the strong aristocratic feeling then existing in England which kept her apart from the democratic empire of France, and it was this fact that made Napoleon the more anxious to prevail over it. He imitated all the follies, licentiousness, and etiquette of the old Courts and the old nobility of Europe, while affecting to despise them; no one loved more than he to move about with Imperial pomp, to have his portraits taken in ermine robes and a laurel crown, and to parade his decorations before the public; and he displayed a feminine jealousy of any distinguished person, man or woman, who attracted attention from himself by either merit, beauty, or talent. Madame Recamier, Madame de Staël, Gall the physiologist, and Moreau, all experienced this in different ways; and even his marshals, who had helped him so effectually to build up his fame, were mentioned in the most disparaging manner to Alexander at Tilsit. He called one a mere washerwoman, another an empty-headed fop, &c., saying that if he were to die it would soon be seen what inefficient officers he possessed; and in his bulletins he studiously avoided mention of their particular exploits. His military genius was not shown in the battle of Jena; for while he there opposed the Prince of Hohenlohe, commanding 40,000 men, with a corps of 90,000 Frenchmen, including the whole of Murat's cavalry, Davoust heading only 30,000 men, overthrew a force of 60,000 commanded by the King of Prussia at Auerstadt. Yet the two engagements are mentioned as if they had been all one battle; and after dilating fully on his own achievements, he speaks of Davoust as if he had led a mere division in the same field.

In March, 1808, another step was made in the re-establishment of an hereditary monarchy in France by the creation of an hereditary nobility; and Napoleon found it a most powerful

* Madame Chevreuse.

addition to his patronage, when besides the pensions which the heavy indemnities he had secured allowed him to shower upon his officers, he was also able to create them Dukes and Counts. And yet even with these allurements, and the bait held out to them, "that every private soldier carried a field-marshal's bâton in his knapsack," the most violent measures had to be taken to secure and keep conscripts. In the last years of the Empire 800*l.* and 1000*l.* was paid for a substitute, and only inveterate asthma, or a wasting consumption, could procure exemption. A traveller visiting Mayence in the spring of 1808, saw 1100 miserable recruits in the course of two or three days being brought there in chains. No less than eleven dépôts were established in France for the punishment of the refractory, and there youths who had maimed themselves, or tried otherwise to evade the conscription, were condemned to wear the uniform of convicts, to be fed on bread and water, and labour on fortifications and public works without pay. A deserter, or person who failed to attend when summoned, was fined 1500 francs, and sentenced to three years' hard labour in the interior of France, with his head closely shaved, but his beard long; if he deserted from the army, his punishment was inflicted in a frontier fortress, where he was sentenced to hard labour on bread and water for ten years, with a bullet of eight pounds' weight chained to his leg, and with unshaven beard, but a shaven head, to prevent all possibility of escape. It is needless to add that none lived through the term of this punishment. The schools were exclusively devoted to the education of submissive soldiers; neither religion, political subjects, nor moral disquisitions were permitted. The pupils were not even allowed to correspond freely with their parents, and the sons of the disaffected nobility were especially selected and compelled to fill them, that they might be kept as hostages for their fathers' good conduct. A sort of catechism framed for their instruction exalted Napoleon, as Lanfrey expresses it, "to the regions of theology," and would have even shocked a nation educated in scepticism, if the people had not been already accustomed to the fawning adulation of the Imperial courtiers, from which the Gallican clergy were not totally exempt. "The Almighty," said the Prefect of Arras, "created Bonaparte, and rested from His labours." The Count

de Fabre, a senator, compared the mother of Napoleon to the Blessed Virgin. It only proved that mankind is incapable of standing alone, and must have some being to reverence and worship. The French, taught in their youth by the Republicans to deny the Power to whom alone it is due, were constrained to raise an idol of their own, and to flatter and bow down before him till he believed himself that he possessed almost superhuman strength. This devotion was repaid by the suppression of the popular voice, as if France had been a conquered country. Every civil prison contained men consigned to perpetual captivity for no other crime than having expressed disapprobation of the Imperial measures, or spoken slightly of the Emperor. The whole vital force of the nation was expended in war: in conquering kingdoms for Napoleon's relations, or trying to subdue the power of Russia, that he might reign without an equal in Europe; in filling the Imperial treasury with contributions drawn from other States, and thus enabling France to support the extravagant expenditure with which her Sovereign tried to silence discontent. The west of Europe was rapidly relapsing into the most oppressive military despotism. France was become a nation like the Zaporaghian Cossacks of old, whose only aim and end was war, and she contributed a yearly average of 250,000 of the flower of her youth to shed their blood in campaigns perfectly foreign to her interests. On the other hand, the east of Europe under Alexander was being ruled with a more gentle and liberal autocratic hand than it had experienced for centuries. He had desired peace to develop the resources of the country and improve the social condition of his people; but now, though at peace with France, he was still at war with England, Turkey, and Persia, and the money he required for civil purposes was forced to be expended on military armaments. With a population of 14,000,000, Great Britain and Ireland possessed an annual income raised by taxes of 63,211,000*l.* during the four last years of the war with France* (1811-15), besides being able to obtain yearly loans from her own people to the amount of 24 and 30 millions; while France, whose population was estimated by Napoleon at 40,000,000 (probably including Belgium and Savoy), drew a yearly revenue of 29 and 35

* England expended yearly 89,000,000*l.* from 1808 to 1814.

millions during the same period, and expended 100,000,000*l.*, the surplus being obtained by contributions from foreign countries, which, according to the Marquis de Frondeville, raised the revenue to a total of 80 millions sterling. But Russia, with a population of 36,000,000, only drew 12,000,000*l.* a year from her subjects, and could not procure a loan. Small indeed were the pecuniary rewards bestowed upon her soldiers compared with those showered upon the French. It was a mercenary motive which drew the French soldiers under a leader of foreign birth across Europe ; but it was pure patriotism and loyalty enlisted in the cause of liberty, religion, and the oppressed which brought the Russian soldiers under their native Sovereign, from the heart of their empire and the recesses of Asia, to make their triumphal entry into Paris.

The last pretender to the throne of Russia died at Horsens in Jutland, April 9th, 1807, in Catherine Alexievna, a deaf and dumb sister of the unfortunate Ivan VI. Alexander's birth, by strengthening his grandmother's claim on the crown, had obtained her release with her brothers and sisters from the prison of Kolmogri, when they were transferred to the care of their aunt, the Queen-mother of Denmark. This survivor of a hapless family wrote to her cousin, the Emperor, a short time before her death, asking him to provide for her attendants, and received a very kind letter in reply, promising all she wished. By his orders a tablet was erected to her memory in the parish church at Horsens.

CHAPTER II.

1808—1809.

WAR WITH SWEDEN AND TURKEY, AND THE MEETING AT ERFURT.

ÆTAT. 30—31.

A WAR with Sweden was the inevitable result of her refusal to join France and Russia, and if Gustavus had consulted the interests of his country instead of his personal inclinations, he would decidedly have adhered to his alliance with Russia, rather than have attached himself to Great Britain. He might have followed this course without difficulty, as by the treaty of 1783, between Catherine and Gustavus III., and the treaty of 1800, between Paul and himself, it was agreed that Russia and Sweden should invariably act together, that the Baltic was a closed sea, and that the two Powers should defend each other from attack. But Gustavus had read a book by Jung Stilling, which proved to his satisfaction that Bonaparte was the Beast of the Revelations, and the only answer Alexander received to his letter announcing the treaty of Tilsit was a rambling discourse to prove that he risked his salvation by any intercourse with the French Emperor. He had never liked Alexander, and his unkindness to his young wife was grounded on the idea that when she was taken to St. Petersburg with her sister the Empress, in their youth, she would willingly have become his bride. It was thought he also regretted his conduct to the beautiful Alexandra, but he lost no opportunity of trying to annoy her brother, whose forbearance he seems to have considered inexhaustible, although he ruled only three millions of people, and Alexander commanded twelve times that number of subjects. He refused to receive two Russian envoys in succession during the year 1801, the first because he was not of sufficiently illustrious birth, the

second as he must first be assured that he had taken no part in Paul's death. Again, in 1803, he encroached on the Russian frontier, and although the two nations signed another defensive alliance in January, 1805, and Alexander prevented Prussia from seizing Swedish Pomerania, he refused for several days to allow a passage to the Russian troops in 1807 across a narrow neck of land scarcely an English mile in breadth, which formed part of his German territory; yet he had offered to sell to Russia for seven millions of dollars the whole of the remaining conquests of the great Gustavus. While Prussia was in alliance with France he ordered the Swedish fleet to capture Prussian vessels and to blockade her ports, and directed that the defenceless towns on the coast of the Baltic should be bombarded unless a sum of money was paid to procure an exemption. During the campaign of Friedland his troops signed an armistice with the French in Pomerania in April, 1807, though their co-operation was a part of the treaty between Prussia and Sweden; but Gustavus never fulfilled his share of his engagements towards Russia, and his nominal alliance gave Alexander much perplexity but no real assistance.

In July, 1807, he sent back the Order of St. Andrew, formerly received from Catherine, on which Alexander returned a Swedish Order, with a very polite letter,* for the Empress tried to preserve peace lest any difficulty with Russia should be visited on the unhappy Queen. Napoleon was also unwilling to offend the Swedish people, looking upon them as his future allies against Russia; and when the armistice was signed in April, 1807, he permitted it to be drawn up without compelling Sweden to acknowledge his Imperial title. Again, though the treaty of Tilsit bound him to help Russia if she went to war with Sweden, he studiously kept out of the contest in 1808, being anxious to embroil the two neighbours, but to keep on good terms with the Swedes himself—the same double game which he played with Turkey. When Gustavus refused Alexander's overtures to conclude a peace between Sweden and France, he made a solemn declaration that he was not at war for any Swedish interests, but exclusively for the restoration of the Bourbons to the throne of their ancestors, and

* *Last Days of Gustavus.* A Swedish official publication.

tried to destroy the Prussians left in Pomerania, by concealing the fact that their King had concluded peace, and ordering them to fire on the French. He also refused to permit them to take provisions from their own magazines, compelling them either to starve or plunder.

Sweden entered into a new subsidiary alliance with Great Britain, June 23rd, and immediately after the treaty prepared for war. Stralsund was speedily taken by the French, and the Swedes were compelled to cross the Baltic, the King having been the first fugitive in the only engagement in which he ever was present. He approved of the British expedition to Copenhagen, and furnished the besiegers with provisions, yet from that moment entertained the most profound mistrust of the British Cabinet, and instead of collecting his army on the Russian frontier, kept a large force assembled on the shores opposite to the Sound, to guard against a sudden attack from Great Britain. This measure and the indignation that the capture of the Danish fleet excited in Stockholm, where an Englishman was liable to insult if he appeared in the street, gave Alexander some hope of avoiding war. The Swedish Admiral of the Fleet declared it would not in the least surprise him if the Swedish ships were taken under British *protection* to prevent them falling into the hands of Russia or France; and the King actually wished to sell his fleet to *Napoleon* to preserve it from such a contingency. Alexander therefore wrote again, January, 1808, proposing to Sweden to restore the armed neutrality of the Northern Powers, and referring to their old treaties; he also delivered a note to the Swedish minister at St. Petersburg, but Gustavus had talked all the autumn of going to war with Russia. He was offended rather than otherwise by Alexander's moderation, and returned no answer to his letter, entering into a closer alliance with Great Britain, who sent a representative to his Court, and agreed to pay a subsidy of 1,200,000*l.* a year, in quarterly payments, while Sweden continued at war with Russia and France.

All the Swedish ministers and generals urged upon Gustavus the necessity of strengthening Finland, where there was much discontent, as it was certain to be the first province entered by Russia. But Gustavus piqued himself on being a religious man, with more knowledge of the Scriptures than his opponent,

and he asserted that Providence would certainly give him the victory in any contest with the Czar, and appealed to the calamities which befell the Russian army at Austerlitz and Friedland as a proof that Alexander was an especial object of the Divine displeasure. This idea gave him entire confidence in his own chance of success; and while he knew a large Russian force had assembled on the borders of Swedish Finland, and he was called upon in November, December, and in January to join the Russian alliance, he steadily refused to answer Alexander's letter, or to make any preparations for defence in that quarter of his territories.

On February 8th, 1808, Count Buxhowden, the commander-in-chief of the Russian army, crossed the river Kymen, and entered Swedish territory with two divisions of his force. He sent forward a flag of truce, but the officer who bore it was fired upon, and he announced that this act was a declaration of war. In two addresses he exhorted the inhabitants to remain quietly in their homes, assuring them that strict discipline should be maintained among the troops, and promising that all the provisions, &c., furnished to the army should be punctually paid for, while every respect should be shown to the laws and institutions of the country. Two days later the Russian Government declared war, Alexander proclaiming that he owed it to his people and to the security of his dominions, "which is to a Sovereign the highest of all laws, no longer to leave the co-operation of Sweden with Russia a matter of doubt," but that his Swedish Majesty has it still in his power to prevent a rupture between the two nations if he will without delay join Russia and Denmark in shutting up the Baltic against England until the conclusion of a peace. This was answered by Gustavus placing the Russian ambassador at Stockholm under arrest (March 3rd); and in return Alexander announced (March 25th) that he should unite Swedish Finland for ever to his empire; but Baron Stedingk, the Swedish envoy in St. Petersburg, was left free either to remain or to return to Stockholm, and no Swedish subject or property was seized in Russia.

The Russian invading army consisted of 16,000 men, well supplied with food and clothing; the artillery was mounted on sledges, and snow-shoes were dealt out to the soldiers; but the poverty of the country, which at all times cannot provision

itself, obliged supplies to be brought from St. Petersburg throughout the campaign ; and recollecting the famine and subsequent fever in those parts of Prussia overrun by the French, Alexander ordered several magazines to be established for the special purpose of keeping the Finlanders from starvation. The divisions of the Russian army were commanded by Kamenski, Galitzin, Orlof Denisof, Touchkof, Gortchakof, and Bagration, and was afterwards reinforced by the corps of Barclay de Tolly, which crossed the Gulf of Bothnia on the ice and landed on the coast of Sweden ; the naval operations were intrusted to Admiral Tchichagof, who as Minister of Marine remained at St. Petersburg, and during this period Aratchaief was appointed Minister of War.

Sir John Moore landed, May 14th, at Gothenburg in Sweden with 14,000 British troops for her assistance, and a British squadron under Admiral Saumarez appeared in the Gulf of Finland, with instructions " to attempt to destroy the Russian fleet." It captured a man-of-war carrying seventy-four guns, but the obstinacy of Gustavus prevented his allies from affording him all the aid they had prepared. He was jealous of the English, and tried to force impracticable plans upon their general, who in the end returned home without meeting the Russians ; but their presence even for a time inspired fresh vigour into the Swedish plans of defence, and an army was sent to Finland, where the natives were incited to rise against the invaders. The Russians advanced as far as Abo, and crossing the sea on the ice occupied Gothland and the Aland isles, which were retaken by the combined British and Swedish fleets during the summer, and the Russians expelled from East Bothnia. A French army under Bernadotte occupied Zealand, and Alexander called on Napoleon to fulfil his part of the compact, and order this force to enter Sweden ; but Napoleon wrote privately to Caulaincourt, " I have nothing to gain by seeing the Russians at Stockholm ;" and Bernadotte remained inactive, doing positive harm to his Russian allies, for he prevented Gustavus from carrying out a plan of entering Zealand, and caused him to turn his whole energies to the side of Finland. But the capture of the fortress of Sveaborg deprived the Swedish army of its chief support. It was given up by its commander, Count Cronstedt, after a twelve days' bombardment,

and an armistice of a month, during which period it received no relief from the Swedish fleet, and the Russians agreed to take upon themselves the public debt of the town, amounting to 100,000 thalers. The garrison withdrew with their arms, and Cronstedt afterwards took the field against the Russians at Kourtan and Salmi.

Finland, like Spain, presents great difficulties to an invader when its population are called to arms; but though the Finlanders rose at the royal command, they were unprovided with powder or food, and the Russians repulsed two Swedish divisions attempting to land on the coast. Gustavus wrote an abusive letter to Alexander, July 21st, but the Emperor returned it without an answer, and in the course of this month the Russians gained some naval successes over the Swedes. Count Kamenski and Bagration also recaptured East Bothnia, and in September the Swedes proposed an armistice which Buxhowden accepted, but Alexander considered it a great mistake, and rejected it as soon as the intelligence was forwarded to him at Erfurt. The Swedes spent the interval in fortifying their positions, but were defeated after the conclusion of the armistice at Kaliaoki, November 6th, and on the 7th they concluded another truce on condition that all Finland should belong to Russia.

While Alexander was carrying on his campaign in Finland, Napoleon was following up his plans in Spain, although, during the war with Russia, she had been a useful ally. For ten years the Cabinet of Madrid cordially supported the French policy, placed her armies and fleets at the disposal of France, and annually paid 2,800,000*l.* towards the expenses of the French campaigns. The Prime Minister, Godoy, was indeed irritated by the terms of peace Napoleon signed with D'Oubril in July, 1806, including a stipulation that the Balearic Islands belonging to Spain should be given up to the ex-King of Naples, and that the Spanish treasury should be burdened for ever with an annuity to the Neapolitan royal family; and in this moment of irritation he was induced by the Russian ambassador to sign a secret treaty binding Spain to declare war against France and lead an army to the Pyrenees at the commencement of the Prussian war in 1806-7. But Napoleon's agents discovered this intention, and his threats caused the

force destined to act against the French to be transferred, under the Marquis of Romana, to serve with them on the shores of the Baltic.

An invasion of France during the Polish campaign might have saved Prussia, and after Spain had joined his enemies Alexander could hardly be expected to interest himself in her favour at Tilsit. He should rather have rejoiced to see that the effect of that treaty was to make Napoleon cast off by turns the allies who had assisted his conquests. Napoleon had not the smallest pretext to urge against Portugal, except that he wanted to satisfy another member of his family with a throne. The Prince Regent, who governed the country for his insane mother, the Queen, made every submission France decreed, expelling the British merchants and the British minister, and closing his ports against English ships. He did hesitate about confiscating British property, as it was contrary to existing treaties, without a preliminary notice, and an army under Junot was at once marched on Lisbon. A few hours before the French entered the capital (November 30th) the Prince Regent and all his family sailed on board an English vessel to the Brazils, and the country, abandoned by its natural guardians, submitted without resistance. This easy victory did not alarm the Court of Madrid, where Napoleon took advantage of dissensions in the royal family to hold out hopes to the weak and vicious Prince of the Asturias of assisting him to dethrone his father and obtain possession of the crown, while at the same time he appeared in the light of a protector to Charles IV. In October, 1807, he states in a letter to Joseph, that he had 800,000 men under arms, besides 150,000 belonging to the allied States. A portion of these at once entered Spain under Murat, to preserve tranquillity during the cession of several provinces to the King of Etruria (Charles's son-in-law), in exchange for the Italian kingdom of Etruria, which was made over to France. On March 18th, 1808, a tumult broke out in Madrid, when the Prime Minister's house was sacked, and some Spaniards breaking into the Russian Embassy, murdered every Frenchman who had taken refuge there, so that the Russian ambassador at once demanded his passport. This tumult was exactly the pretext Napoleon needed for taking possession of Madrid, and Murat entered it March 23rd, while

all the royal family* were conveyed across the frontier, and forced, under fear of death, to sign a paper by which they abdicated the throne for ever. They arrived at Bayonne May 4th, and Joseph was proclaimed King of Spain July 24th, Naples being transferred to Murat. But the Spanish people were not to be utterly disregarded with impunity. They rose up in insurrection, and at the first symptoms Murat executed ninety-three peasants in Madrid. This act served as wildfire to the whole population of the Peninsula, and the most frightful scenes were the result; but the British Government, perceiving that Spain was a favourable theatre for carrying on the war against France, declared itself an ally of the Spanish insurgents, and sent an army to their assistance. The flame spread to Portugal, and a British fleet sailed to the Tagus, where, in August, 1808, it found the Russian squadron, which had taken refuge there on its way from the Mediterranean to the Baltic. Admiral Siniavine gained a victory over the Turkish fleet in 1807, which exhausted his powder, so as to disable him from trying to force the Dardanelles, and having discharged his duties at Corfu, he was bringing his vessels back to Russia. He escaped into the Tagus to avoid the British cruisers, and remained there till his French allies were forced to retreat. It has been erroneously stated that he had come to assist the French operations in Portugal, but his meeting with Admiral Cotton was an accident, and being without ammunition he surrendered his ships on condition that they should be restored just as they were within six months of the conclusion of a peace between Alexander and George III.

Though Napoleon certainly mentioned to Alexander his wish to regulate the disturbed internal affairs of Spain by an armed intervention, and to abolish the Inquisition and other relics of a barbarous and superstitious age, he does not appear to have imparted his design of placing a French prince on the throne at that period, and perhaps had not decided on it

* Savary, then recalled from St. Petersburg, was employed on this occasion to allure the royal family by the most deceitful promises to the frontier of Spain. Nothing could be more hypocritical or base than the professions of Napoleon and his lieutenants to these weak princes, till he had them fairly in his power; as even M. Thiers admits. "I," he says, "who wish to cast no shade on the glory of Napoleon, must speak the truth," &c.

himself. Savary says that when the troubles began in the Peninsula Alexander never alluded to the subject with him, and though Napoleon wrote every week to Savary he never said anything about Spain. "He was so anxious," says Savary, "to draw closer the bonds of the Russian alliance," that he evidently did not wish the matter to be brought more than necessary before Alexander, nor that he should learn the whole truth of the French intrigues. He even tried to deceive his own relations, and in writing to Louis Bonaparte to offer him the throne of Spain (March 27th, 1808), he says, "the people loudly ask me to fix their destinies." Again he wrote to Alexander (July 8th, 1808), seven months after Savary left Russia, that, "obliged to mix in Spanish affairs, he was led by the irresistible torrent of events to a system which, in assuring the happiness of Spain, assured the peace of the Empire. In this new situation Spain would be more independent of Napoleon than she had ever been. I have reason," he added, "to be much satisfied with all persons of rank, fortune, or education. The monks alone, foreseeing the destruction of abuses, and the agents of the Inquisition, who fear the termination of their existence, agitate the country." Twenty days later, a letter from Joseph to Napoleon hardly confirms this statement. "The priests, and even the monks, in Spain strongly desire peace; but the great and rich, above all the women, are detestable." Napoleon answered by assuring him that he had received satisfactory letters from the Emperor of Russia. With regard to Spain, "all was arranged there."

To the Spanish Canon Escoiquiz,* whom he met at Bayonne, he declared that the interests of *his house* required that the Bourbons should cease to reign in Spain. "It is in vain to speak to me of the difficulties of the enterprise; I have nothing to apprehend from the only power that could disquiet me in it. The Emperor of Russia, to whom I communicated my designs at Tilsit, approved of them, and gave me his word of honour he would offer no resistance.† The other Powers of Europe will remain quiet. Even if the people were to rise in a mass I would succeed in conquering them by sacrificing 200,000 men. . . . The countries where monks are numerous

* Escoiquiz, 107, quoted by Alison.

† This was possibly merely a boast of Napoleon's.

are easily subjugated." 200,000 Frenchmen, if necessary, were to be sacrificed to procure a throne for another Bonaparte! for Napoleon assured the Canon he did not want a village for himself, and the greatest alarmist could not pretend that France had anything to fear from Spanish aggression. In the same conversation Napoleon offered Etruria to the Spanish royal family, and said the Spaniards would soon yield when they saw he was providing for the national independence, giving them a liberal constitution, and maintaining their customs and religion.

Sir Robert Adair wrote from Vienna, January, 1808, that "great dissatisfaction prevails at St. Petersburg in consequence of the non-fulfilment of the treaty of Tilsit by France. France, and France only, prevents the conclusion of the Turkish peace, and the cession of Moldavia and Wallachia, and much of Bonaparte's conduct in Italy has been offensive to Russia." At the end of November, 1807, Savary was recalled, and with the idea that a man of good birth might be more favourably received by the Russian nobles, Napoleon sent Caulaincourt, shortly afterwards created Duc de Vicenze, in his place; but Savary told him he would meet with an equally chilling reception, as it was generally supposed that he was implicated, like himself, in the murder of the Duc d'Enghien.* Napoleon never would believe that this was the real ground of the obstacle to Savary's popularity in St. Petersburg, the Russian boyards being accustomed to tragedies. Caulaincourt had been much attracted by Alexander when he went to Russia in 1801. He was distressed to think he should suppose him capable of such a crime, and as soon as he knew that he was to fill Savary's place he wrote to the Czar excusing himself from any share in it, and offering to send him some proofs of the truth of this statement. Alexander, according to Caulaincourt, answered that he required no documents to convince him. "I have received every information," he said, "from my ministers who were then resident in Germany. I know that you were a stranger to that horrible affair. If I preserved the least doubt nothing would make me receive you. On your first sojourn here I was very young; you were so

* It was generally supposed at that time that Caulaincourt, not Savary, was implicated in it.

also ; but I formed my opinion of you, and before knowing other details I should hardly have believed you could have been mixed up in such an infamy." Caulaincourt thought Napoleon was aware of this correspondence through his post-office spies, but he never mentioned it to him. He received an unlimited allowance for the expenses of his embassy, with orders to be as magnificent as possible, and at all costs to bring round the Russian nobility to look favourably on the French alliance. A private letter from St. Petersburg, dated February, 1808, asserts that the honours paid to Caulaincourt on his arrival "were viewed with sullen silence, but the reflections since unreservedly made throughout the capital are such as must be far from pleasing to the Emperor, for they are in direct hostility to the new order of things." Caulaincourt, more sensitive than Savary, was greatly mortified ; but Alexander told him he would soon secure for him some popularity. He accordingly walked with him down the fashionable promenade in St. Petersburg, and after this open display of friendship all who wished to be agreeable to the Emperor were civil to the ambassador.

The year 1808 was the gayest in St. Petersburg since Alexander came to the throne. The Guards had returned from the war, and to drown the recollections of two years of hardship and active service they plunged into every diversion which riches and luxury could invent. The Russian nobility remained in their own country, instead of flocking to Paris as in 1801, for the pompous display and stiff etiquette of the Court of the parvenu Emperor did not hold out the same attractions as the novelty of the young Republic, with its absence of social distinctions and a renowned military chief for its President. In this respect an unpopular peace was a benefit to Russia, as instead of spending their fortunes out of the empire, they assisted in promoting the internal commerce of the country. Caulaincourt considered his four years' residence in Russia as the happiest of his life. "That brilliant Court," he said, "was dazzling as a glorious dream ; round the throne all was gay, young, delirious, like the traditions of the youth of Louis XIV. The days of reception, the drawing-rooms of the palace, realized what the most intoxicated imagination could create ; it was the wonders of the Arabian Nights, a luxury quite Asiatic ;

the most lovely women radiant in beauty, grace, and elegance, sparkling with diamonds, witty, instructed, frivolous, greedy of dancing, music, fêtes, and pleasures; the most elegant young men of refined language and manners, magnificent and lavish to an extent to make all our French models, the Richelieus, the Narbonnes, and other celebrities despair. Every day brought new fêtes. I was resolved to yield in nothing in my establishment." On one occasion he gave 125 louis for a dish of five pears at a ball supper. Another time he ordered cherries at 4 francs apiece, to be served with the same profusion as if they had been 20 sous a pound. All the tables of the great Russian lords were served with the same sumptuousness. When Napoleon heard of Caulaincourt's pears, he said, "When I was sub-lieutenant I should have been very glad of your Russian pears for a year's income." He was greedy to hear everything about the Court of Russia. He wrote, "It is not an indifferent thing to me to observe the nature of a man who was born on the throne. Give me the smallest details; the private life of a man is a reflector where one can read him and instruct oneself fruitfully." And they were curious details which the ambassador related to his master. The Empress-Dowager bitterly reproached her son for the conclusion of the peace of Tilsit, and the cool manner in which the young Empress received her husband on his return from the war was enough to have alienated a much warmer attachment than he felt for his wife. By the end of the year 1807 their child had joined her infant sisters in the vault in St. Alexander Nevskoi's Church, and now having no longer a daughter of his own to inherit his throne, Alexander confirmed his father's ukaz, which vested the succession inalienably on the nearest male heir, to the exclusion of females, unless the male branches were extinct. The two Empresses were much aggrieved by this law, as it excluded them in favour of Constantine, if Alexander died without leaving a son, and it added in no small measure to the family dissensions at this time; but the crowning point was the invasion of Finland, for the Empress-Dowager professed to admire the King of Sweden, and the reigning Empress lamented it for her sister's sake. The Princess Amelia of Baden took their side in the question, and all three were irritated at the humiliation of their relatives



in being compelled to marry Stephanie Beauharnais and Jerome Bonaparte. The circle of friends, Czartoriski, Novossilzof, and Strogonof, were now estranged from the Emperor, except in public. His young aide-de-camp, Dolgoruki, who had aspired to the same familiarity, was dead, and in their place he occupied his evenings with Speranski in the organization of the new legal tribunals. But this was not relaxation, and the gloom of earlier years began to creep over him, particularly when he reviewed the unvarying calamities of his reign. He sought relief from it in perhaps the only romance of his life. The *prima donna* of St. Petersburg, in beauty, talent, and accomplishments, was the wife of M. Narishkin, the grand huntsman of the Court, one of Paul's favourites, and who through the mother of Peter the Great boasted a relationship to the Imperial family. Her father, a Polish nobleman, Prince Czertvertinsky, claimed descent from the ancient royal family of Russia, and her mother was more nearly related to the Imperial House. Her brother was one of the Emperor's aides-de-camp. Though past her first youth, for she was older than Alexander, she still possessed the attractive qualities and loose notions of morality for which her country was especially famed, and she was married to an elderly widower whom she did not even profess to love. The Count de Lagarde describes her as the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. Another foreign nobleman says, "Her beauty, her affable manners, and the goodness (?) of her heart all combined to make her the model of perfection in her sex. Perhaps she might not with equal truth be called the pattern of female virtue." She was very accomplished, "a good musician, singing marvellously;" and Caulaincourt asserts, was "the most irresistible woman in the whole world." She was one of the ladies frequently in attendance on the Court, and her own drawing-room was crowded with the fashionable world of St. Petersburg. Her husband and her brother-in-law, who was hereditary grand chamberlain, had both been attached to the Court since Alexander was a boy, and their father and mother enjoyed the closest confidence of the Empress Catherine. She had long perceived the Emperor admired her; and now when politics caused a division in the Imperial family, she tried by the most practised coquetry to blow the scarcely lighted spark

into a flame.* She was the leader of the Philo-Anglicans, and during a month tossed her head haughtily whenever the Emperor spoke to her, treating him with absolute incivility. "The Court, where nothing was concealed, was full of it. Alexander was yet a young man," says Caulaincourt, "in every acceptation of the word. He was the most noble, the most amiable character. Sovereigns have only subjects. One may try to dispute this fact. It exists. I loved him like a brother, and he was as friendly with me as he could be with his own brothers."

This friendliness was carried to such a length that, according to Caulaincourt, the Emperor more than once called upon him in the middle of the night, and seated at the foot of his bed talked for hours about her extraordinary conduct; her marked preference for his aides-de-camp, and the way in which she tried to raise a party against him to destroy his influence. He sometimes had a great mind to send her a tour in Siberia. "The Emperor," adds Caulaincourt, "really seemed to have completely lost his head. 'A woman,' wrote Napoleon to the French ambassador, 'turn the head of the autocrat of all the Russias! All the women in the world would not make me lose mine for an hour.'"

The lady, who had found all other tactics fail, was at last able to boast of a triumph, and, though only a short one, she openly exulted over it to the end of her life. Her husband's debts were paid, and when she retired from Russia she received a pension. "Yet she was not a Maintenon, or at all that sort of person," says De Maistre. "She had no influence whatever in politics, and never mixed in them. The Empress herself gave her proofs of affection." M. de Maistre often visited her house, where she was surrounded by the best society of St. Petersburg. Constantine went there with the most important persons of his Court, and she exercised her fascinations on others besides the Emperor. The Empress seemed absorbed in the cares of the toilette, mingled with curiosity regarding France and its Emperor. "My part was most difficult," writes

* She told a friend that her husband would never have forgiven her if she had lost such an opportunity of repairing their shattered fortune. Though educated in Catherine's Court, Alexander had a higher moral standard than most of his contemporaries, and the orgies of the Pavilion, the Tuilleries, and Elba were unknown in his palace.

Caulaincourt, "with the Empress Elizabeth, who was truly insatiable for information about Napoleon. Each time we found ourselves in a small circle she put me through a species of catechism; it was questions without end on the arrangements of our fêtes, our receptions, our balls, on the fashions, toilettes, &c. I made myself a milliner with the charming Empress Elizabeth. Napoleon mixed himself occasionally with dresses and bonnets. More than one lady of the Court has had cruel experience of it. I heard him say at St. Cloud, in his harshest, rudest voice, to the wife of a general, 'Madame, when one has a husband who receives 100,000 francs a year, one can go to the cost of a new robe each time that one has the honour of paying one's court to the Empress. Salaries, madame, are favours. I do not owe them, and when I give them it is that they may serve to feed luxury, without which there is no commerce.' I entertained my master with the deep griefs of the Empress of Russia, that the Parisian fashions only arrived in Russia when they were already changed. One remarkable fact was, that the royal questioner never asked anything about Josephine. Madame de Beauharnais crowned. She was a vulgar person."

During a second ball Caulaincourt gave at St. Petersburg his house caught fire, and remembering the danger which a panic has often caused in such cases by the great rush of people when the reception-rooms are much crowded, he gave orders that no one should be informed of it, or induced to leave the room, except the Emperor. He offered to conduct the Emperor out quietly. Alexander asked if the fire was likely to be extinguished, and hearing there was every hope that it would be so, he said that as long as he remained himself the rest would be less likely to suspect anything was amiss, and with the utmost coolness continued to converse with the company. About half an hour afterwards Caulaincourt came again to inform him that the fire was completely subdued, it not having been quite so serious as was at first supposed. "Then I may now take my leave," he said, "as I have a good many papers to look over to-night." The necessity of Caulaincourt's precaution was evinced rather later by a fire at the Austrian Embassy in Paris, when the terrible accidents which occurred were partly caused by the crowd

overwhelming the firemen, and losing all presence of mind in the instinct of self-preservation. "The magnificent Imperial reviews at St. Petersburg," continues Caulaincourt, "were truly a noble spectacle. The troops admirable in build and costume. In the regiment of the Chevalier Guards, created by Paul, all the privates are Knights of Malta, the uniform red, massive silver cuirasses, with the Cross of the Order in relief, forming a large escutcheon on the chest. The officers of this corps are all of the highest distinction. Gold and precious stones sparkled over them, and over their Arab horses, of an ideal value. Nothing equalled the brilliancy of these reviews. The Russian uniform is at once graceful and martial. The clothes are admirably well made. The staff which surrounded the Emperor was dazzling, and a young sovereign might be permitted to be proud of them. One must form an idea of the enormous power and almost superstitious adulation with which the autocrat of all the Russias is surrounded to comprehend the surprise it gave to us Frenchmen. Yet Alexander permitted excessive familiarity on the part of many young people to whom he took a fancy, and also amongst the grand seigneurs." There was a sort of Court fool, named Frogère, who was engaged to amuse Alexander when he was Grand Duke. Paul banished him from St. Petersburg for an ill-timed joke, and though he was soon permitted to return he carefully kept away from the palace. One day Alexander met him, and said, "Why, Frogère, I never see you now." "O, Sire," he answered, "I went to the Crown Prince as a comrade, but now I was afraid that your good situation would have made you too proud; but since it is not so, I will return to see you." The Empress was attended by a favourite dwarf, for fools and dwarfs were as common appendages to the houses of the Russian and Polish nobility at that time as in France and England during the period of the Valois and the Plantagenets. Yet, notwithstanding this relic of mediævalism, "St. Petersburg in 1810 offered all artistic resources which could charm the eyes and the ears. Our singing and dancing celebrities asked leave for Russia, and at the theatre of St. Petersburg, in the evening, one might think oneself in Paris."* The Count de Lagarde asserts that "the drawing-rooms of St. Petersburg

* Caulaincourt's Souvenirs.

were the most polished, and for aristocratic ease the first in Europe.”*

Yet the Imperial fêtes, like Alexander's ambition, had all one end—“to forget our misfortunes,” as he said to Savary, and to reconcile his subjects to the French alliance. He told the same minister that he had already become sufficiently unpopular in the eyes of his people owing to the declaration of war with England. It was necessary that at least he should present them with the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia as a compensation. Was Napoleon uneasy about Europe? What was Europe? Where was she if not between Russia and France? This was indeed true, for England seemed to have retired altogether from the scene, and in November, 1807, Austria joined the Continental alliance, and the British minister left Vienna. But her army was by no means the inferior force which the inactivity of its Government had lately led the Continent to suppose. In the spring of 1808 it consisted of nearly 200,000 men, of whom 26,000 were cavalry, besides 80,000 militia and 290,000 volunteers in a high state of efficiency; and these were preparing to make their influence felt at the south-western extremity of Europe, and to prove that there was still a third empire which could call itself independent.

Napoleon was not the last to perceive the advantages the English Government would take of the Spanish resistance. “If war breaks out (in Spain),” he wrote to Murat, “all will be lost.” In view of being obliged to lessen his forces in Germany, he again wrote to Alexander (February, 1808) to throw out a further bait for the maintenance of their alliance, in another proposal for the entire partition of the Turkish Empire, when Austria would be admitted to a share of the spoil; and a plan to set on foot a gigantic expedition to India. Alexander said he had explained the difficulties of such an expedition at Tilsit (which showed that Napoleon had proposed

* *Fêtes et Souvenirs.*

† Spain indeed could never be called part of the French Empire, and Turkey was equally independent. Napoleon, writing to Murat, March 29th, 1808, says that he is “in the greatest perplexity about Spain. . . . Above all, take care that the Spaniards do not suspect what course I am about to adopt. You can have no difficulty in doing so, for I have not fixed upon one myself.”

it there), but the French were accustomed to set physical obstacles at defiance ; and if Napoleon would first assist him in obtaining the Russian share of the Turkish provinces, he would then join him for an Indian campaign. Nothing would have pleased Napoleon more than to see Alexander exhausting the Russian resources on an attempt to cross the Himalayas, as it would have left him to work his will undisturbed in Prussia, and would have called away the British forces from the Peninsula. But Alexander was not so easily led, and refused to make any advance till he had obtained his terms. "Notwithstanding his chivalrous appearance," wrote Caulaincourt to Napoleon, "the Emperor Alexander is politic enough to look into business." In February, 1808, Napoleon signed a treaty with the Elector of Saxony for the maintenance of an army of 60,000 men in Poland, of which 15,000 were to consist of Frenchmen. It was an evasion of the stipulation to evacuate Prussia, which on its own part only kept up an active force of 18,000 men.

"Hard as the lot of Prussia appeared to be, through the treaty of Tilsit, it was yet enviable," says an eminent historian,* "compared to that which actually ensued from the oppressive exactions of the French Government, and the unbounded insolence of its soldiery." The King and his councillors seemed utterly powerless in the hands of the French generals, and allowed them to override every stipulation of the treaty with scarcely a remonstrance. They signed two further agreements within three months, binding themselves down to more onerous provisions. Instead of the single military road through their territories from Dresden to Warsaw, they allowed five others for troops and commercial purposes to Saxony, Poland and their respective allies subjecting the country to all the cost and annoyance entailed by the continual passage of disorderly troops. Instead of a territory of two leagues in breadth round Dantzic, according to the treaty, General Rapp seized upon a district nine English miles broad, while by a third agreement, at the beginning of November, Prussia ceded New Silesia and the circle of Michelau to Warsaw ; and a portion of the Crown lands to be made into hereditary estates for Berthier, Mortier,

* Alison.

Junot, and other French officers. Long after the King had agreed to the indemnity of 24,000,000*l.*, further claims were brought against him to the amount of 6,160,000*l.* This was the subject of a remonstrance from Alexander, which reached Napoleon at Bayonne, who consequently reduced it to 5,600,000*l.*, and sent a request to the Czar to arrange another interview with him at any place he chose to select between their respective dominions.

An English newspaper for July, 1808, announces that "the King of Prussia is said to have recently had a letter from Bonaparte advising him to abdicate, upon which he wrote at once to St. Petersburg. The Emperors of Russia and Austria sent ambassadors to Paris to remonstrate against the occupation of the Ecclesiastical States by French troops. Alexander on hearing of the changes intended in Spain by Bonaparte from the Russian attachés at Madrid, at once ordered Prince Ousurov to proceed to Paris with a formal protest against the deposition of the Bourbons. He also sent M. Czernichef to Bayonne to obtain some mitigation of the contributions imposed by General Victor on Prussia. Bonaparte received him with great distinction, and presented him with a valuable ring and a brace of pistols, but declined to discuss the subject. When M. Czernichef returned to St. Petersburg early in the last month, the Emperor expressed some soreness at the failure of his mediation." The same paper announces, August, 1808, a report "that a Russian courier, with despatches from Prince Volkonski to the Czar, was robbed and murdered in the department of La Meurthe; and it was a prevalent opinion in St. Petersburg that the adherence of Constantine to the interests of Napoleon was bought by a promise of the throne of Turkey." Like his brother, he was on friendly terms with Caulaincourt, the chief charm of whose existence at St. Petersburg was the friendship of the Imperial family.

In spite of the miseries weighing upon Prussia, the Continent felt that even a temporary peace was a relief, which England could hardly appreciate in her sullen isolation, as so many centuries had passed since she had felt the foot of an invader. The King of Prussia, inspired by his patriotic minister, Baron Stein, began a series of internal reforms and

abolished feudal servitude ; all officers accused of a want of courage or disobedience to orders in the late war were tried by court-martial, and as the number of troops he might keep was strictly limited, a formidable reserve was created by replacing all the veterans by young recruits, in their turn replaced by others after a very short term of service. The Elector of Saxony, contrary to his engagement with Prussia, suddenly emancipated all the serfs in the Duchy of Warsaw ; but as they were without land, and there was no poor law, or any provision for their old age, it was a failure, and produced greater misery than had even formerly existed among the Polish peasantry. The smaller German States continued to flatter Napoleon and adulate France. The poets and historians of Switzerland, Bavaria, Saxe-Coburg, and Saxe-Weimar vied with each other in depreciating German patriotism and lauding the conqueror who had levelled them to the dust. Even Goethe, overcome by a few ordinary civil words, lent his pen for this purpose at the time of his country's most bitter humiliation, and while taxes and the conscription were completely disorganizing the States allied to France. In Würtemberg the children of the peasants were carried away by wolves from the cottage doors, for not even the inhabitants of the most isolated farms were allowed to keep arms. Two formidable bands of robbers traversed the whole Confederation of the Rhine. A French post-office was established at Berlin, where suspected letters from all parts of Germany and Austria were opened, and the writers sought out and arrested by the secret police. Yet Müller, the historian, in an address to the States of Westphalia, declared that "Germany could not have a wish ungratified at the present period, Napoleon having recognized her as the nursery of European civilization. Too sublime to condescend to every-day polity, he has given durability to Germany. Happy nation, what an interminable vista of glory opens to thy view !" Prussia contained some noble exceptions to this general degradation, whom Napoleon soon obliged to carry their patriotism elsewhere. Gentz the writer, who shared with the Queen the conqueror's coarse abuse after Jena, and somewhat to his surprise received a present of a ring from Alexander, through Czartoriski, after the peace of Tilsit ; and Arndt, the author of "What is the



German's Fatherland?" who took refuge first in Sweden and then in Russia.

The Princes of Saxe-Coburg and Mecklenburg went to Paris in the spring of 1808, and the Duke of Saxe-Coburg also came to St. Petersburg to try and obtain an increase of territory, and to offer his hand to Alexander's youngest sister. She was only just thirteen, yet the Empress-Dowager gave her consent to the engagement, for what reason it is difficult to see, as his brother relates* that she was never sincere in it, and broke it off when it had lasted nearly four years. After repeated solicitations from Napoleon, who told Tolstoi he must see his master again before he could reply to his remonstrances about Prussia, Alexander agreed to another meeting with his ally, who wished it to take place in France; but the Czar chose Erfurt, in North Germany, as it was near Weimar, which would enable him to pay a visit to his sister on the road; and not being the residence of a sovereign, he said they should be less fettered there than at Weimar by the accessories of a Court. But Napoleon being new to his dignities did not feel the same enjoyment in descending to private life that Alexander found, after being trammelled with State etiquette from infancy. On the contrary, he thought pomp and display necessary to sustain his position in the eyes of the populace, and at this period never travelled except, as he expressed it, "à l'Empereur."

Alexander spent two days on the road with the Prussian royal family at Königsberg. His mother, seriously alarmed for his safety, assured him that he was being drawn into a trap, like the Spanish princes at Bayonne. She abused Romanzov violently for not preventing the interview, and the Senate of Riga and a deputation from St. Petersburg addressed a formal request to him to stay in his own dominions. The officers of Napoleon's suite laid considerable bets that after learning Ferdinand's fate he would decline to enter Germany, or else be accompanied by a very strong escort. They were mistaken, for he came without attendants except a few courtiers and domestic servants; so that with the baggage the whole occupied about twelve light carriages. Constantine and Caulaincourt preceded him by two days at

* Recollections of King Leopold.

Weimar, and he was accompanied by Romanzov, almost the only friend to the French alliance, his secretary Speranski, and his aides-de-camp on duty. He arrived at Königsberg September 19th, where he was received by the Sovereigns of Prussia. The Queen still maintained her faith in the restoration of her country and the Czar's goodwill, and the royal pair lived in the most exemplary harmony, though reduced to great privations; their plate was sold and their household diminished to enable them to contribute as much as possible to the public funds. The Queen, with her daughter the Princess Charlotte, afterwards Empress of Russia, assisted frequently in household occupations. The whole family dined together with the tutor down to the youngest child, and their table was limited to four dishes at the midday meal, and two at supper; for the King found it difficult to provide the necessary money for even his daughter's dress. Alexander was admitted into this domestic circle like a friend rather than a distinguished guest, and he might have drawn a sad contrast between the united family party and his own childless home. He took a letter from the Queen for Napoleon and proceeded to Weimar, where he wished to stay two days to see his sister, who was in ill-health, being received at Bromberg by Marshal Lannes with a division of the French Imperial Guard, sent forward by Napoleon to meet him with the usual military honours. He took the marshal to Weimar in his own carriage, and paid a compliment to a deputation of French officers on their military renown. But Lannes did not draw, from what he saw of him, a very favourable idea of the duration of the French and Russian alliance, for he afterwards told his master at Erfurt* that he was troubling himself uselessly in attempting to draw Russia into his interests—he never would succeed in making the Emperor his friend; it was therefore a mistake to withdraw his army from Prussia, and to leave Russia, Austria, and Prussia to themselves in order to conquer Spain. The Czar arrived at Weimar on the evening of the 26th, escorted by the troops of

* Muffling's *Passages of My Life*. Von Schladen, the friend of Stein, presented Alexander with a memorial before he left St. Petersburg, showing that Napoleon had laid snares for him at Erfurt, and "in order that he might see through the sophisms, falsehood, and deceptions, which were there prepared."

Marshal Soult, and the next day Napoleon came from Erfurt* to meet him within a mile and a half of Weimar. They greeted each other on the high road between the villages of Ottstedt and Nora.

Napoleon's preparations for the interview were far more elaborate than his ally's, who looked upon it as a mere matter of business, and acceded to it, according to Savary, from courtesy, but from no political motive. A band of French actors, headed by Talma, was brought from Paris to give theatrical performances; besides a number of French cooks, ornaments, and furniture, and he was accompanied by quite a large army. Alexander summoned the Princes of Saxe-Coburg, and one or two of his own German relatives; while Napoleon invited the newly-made Kings of Saxony, Würtemberg, Bavaria, Holland, and Westphalia; the Hereditary Grand Duke of Baden, Alexander's brother-in-law, and his young wife Stephanie Beauharnais, the Princes of Mecklenburg, and several of Würtemberg and Bavaria; besides the French Marshals Soult, Lannes, Oudinot, Berthier, the new Prince of Neufchatel, Talleyrand, Savary, and Caulaincourt. Yet of all the Sovereigns present, of whom the French were so proud, Alexander himself was the only one whose title had not been newly created within the last six years, and it was only by his favour that these dignities survived the crisis of 1814. Prussia was represented by the King's brother, Prince William, and Austria by the Emperor's aide-de-camp, General Vincent.

Napoleon travelled across Germany surrounded by his Guards, and arrived at Erfurt on the morning of the 27th; Alexander was sumptuously accommodated in the house of the merchant Trubel, and the two Emperors each breakfasted at home, but they dined in state every day at Napoleon's house; went out together in the morning, when it was observed that Alexander always rode on Napoleon's right hand; and generally finished the evening at the theatre or at Alexander's house, where, however, as at Tilsit, Napoleon carefully avoided touching any food, though they often remained together till past midnight. Another precaution, to save himself from assassination, was always to take as a companion in his rides

* Erfurt is ten miles from Weimar.

and drives, not a member of his own suite, but either the Czar or one of the most popular German Princes, so that a shot could not be pointed at him without the risk of killing both. The chief business transacted between the Emperors was the separation of Hanover from Westphalia, as an indemnity to the Prince Primate of Germany, and the remittance of 25,000,000 francs from the contribution to be paid by Prussia, with an extension of the time of payment. A treaty was signed to bind down the French to a speedy evacuation of the Prussian States, and to restore at once to the King the right of collecting his own revenues. Napoleon offered to abandon his attempt against the Spanish monarchy on condition that Joseph was declared King of Greece, Albania, and Dalmatia. But Alexander would not hear of this; and after another amicable dispute about the possession of Constantinople, it was decided that the discussion of political matters should be left to the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Romanzov and Champagny, so as not to disturb the harmony of the two potentates. They agreed on sending a joint letter to the King of Great Britain to offer him peace, provided he would accept the present order of things in Europe; and Napoleon suggested that, if it was refused, George III. should be declared by France and Russia to have forfeited his throne, and should be no longer mentioned as a reigning monarch; but Alexander laughed at this proposal, as only likely to excite ridicule, since before his own grandfather (Peter III.) had begun to reign, George III. was firmly seated on the British throne. This letter was written by Alexander, and Napoleon added one or two suggestions:—

“SIRE,—The present circumstances of Europe have brought us together at Erfurt. Our first wish is to yield to the universal desire, and seek, by a speedy peace with your Majesty, the most efficacious remedy for the troubles which oppress all nations. We make known to your Majesty our sincere wish. The long and bloody war which has torn the Continent is at length at an end, without the likelihood of being renewed. Many changes have taken place in Europe, many States have been overthrown; but the cause of the present misery and agitation is to be found in the stagna-

tion of maritime commerce, which has impoverished the greatest nations. Still greater changes may yet take place, and all of them contrary to the policy of England. Peace, then, is at once the interest of the Continent, as it is the interest of your people. We unite in entreating your Majesty to listen to the voice of humanity, silencing that of the passions, to seek (with the intention of arriving at that end) to conciliate all objects, and by that means to preserve the Powers which exist, and to insure the happiness of Europe and of this generation, at the head of which Providence has placed us.

“NAPOLEON. ALEXANDER.”

Canning answered this letter by stating that Great Britain had prolonged the war because no secure and honourable means of peace had yet been offered by her enemies ; that the interests of the crowns of Portugal and the Two Sicilies were confided to her ; and she was an intimate ally of the King of Sweden, without whom she could not make peace. The Government acting for Ferdinand VII. must also be a party to any negotiation in which his Britannic Majesty engaged.

Again Napoleon pressed on his ally an expedition to India, but Alexander would only attempt it through Constantinople. Napoleon then wished to adjourn the question of the Principalities till they had received an answer from England, but on this point Alexander desired Romanzov to be inflexible. In a letter from Champagny to Napoleon, the French minister writes, that “Romanzov wishes that all should be precise. He would rather consent to a delay of which the term should be fixed. The vagueness of the articles of Tilsit,” he said, “has done us too much harm ; an army has been lost, and such is yet the only result of our alliance with you. . . . The feeling which pervaded every word was that of distrust, distrust of events, distrust also of our intentions.” Napoleon yielded the point as regarded Moldavia and Wallachia forming part of Russia, but Alexander said those were not enough. He had already too much barren district in his empire ; he wanted sea-board, and a port to secure the safety of the Russian merchant ships from Odessa. The plague was constantly introduced into his southern provinces from Constantinople and

Turkey, owing to the absence of all sanitary measures in that barbarous country. It was at this very time ravaging the south of Russia, while an epidemic imported by the French wounded and prisoners in 1807 was still wasting the provinces of Courland and Livonia. These calamities were attributed to the French alliance by his superstitious people. It was only a material advantage like the possession of Constantinople which would reconcile them to it. They might be satisfied with Bulgaria to the foot of the Balkans, but with nothing less. Napoleon said, "Believe me, however large a throne may be, it will always be found too small for two masters." In a subsequent conversation on the various forms of religion, occasioned by Goethe having observed to Napoleon that he felt some surprise that he had re-established the Roman Catholic religion in France, instead of one more conformable to the spirit of the day, Alexander made use of an expression which decided the fate of the Pope. He said, "I experience no difficulty in my empire in affairs of religion. I am the head of my own Church." Napoleon seemed much struck with it. This supremacy gave Alexander a spiritual as well as temporal power, far more than he could boast of himself. Modern Europe would hardly recognize this species of Caliph on the throne of France, but the nearest step towards it would be the removal of the seat of the Pope from Rome to Paris; and this was accomplished the following year, and Pius VII. carried off from the Vatican by force.

Among other confidences Napoleon revealed to Alexander his intention to divorce Josephine, and choose another wife from the princesses of Europe. Talleyrand was desired to touch on this subject with the Czar, and represent how much his master wished to ally himself by marriage with one of the great powers, but that Prussia and England were out of the question; and Napoleon was much disappointed that Alexander did not take the hint and propose one of his sisters as especially suitable for the new empress. At last he openly suggested it himself, his wishes being fixed on the Grand Duchess Catherine, a princess of great accomplishments and very superior mental attainments. Alexander thanked him for the honour he proposed to pay his sister, and expressed regret that he could not give him an answer at once, but his mother was the supreme

authority in all strictly family affairs, particularly with regard to his sisters, and the matter must be referred to her. Napoleon said he was surprised that maternal interference should be tolerated in what was really an affair of State. He probably knew quite as well as Alexander that the Empress-Dowager would never consent to it, but there the matter rested till Alexander returned to Russia.

Napoleon's heart was as much set on the conquest of India as Alexander was on Constantinople; the last he evidently hoped to secure for France. "It is the noblest harbour in the world," he said at St. Helena, "and is itself worth a kingdom." But it was his object just now to keep Alexander in good humour. "We are going to administer a dose of opium to the Czar, and while he sleeps we shall occupy ourselves elsewhere," said one of the French generals who accompanied him. "I thought to throw dust in his eyes at Erfurt," said Napoleon in 1814. The French Emperor made a declaration that he would contribute neither directly nor indirectly to the re-establishment of Poland, and as he had already in a reciprocal treaty guaranteed the integrity of Russia, he now signed another article admitting the extension of its dominions over Finland, Moldavia, and Wallachia. In return Alexander gave his sanction to the change in the Sovereigns of Spain and Portugal, and acknowledged Murat as King of Naples. The treaty of Erfurt provided that France was to attack Austria if she joined Turkey against Russia, and Alexander was to declare war against Austria if she *commenced* hostilities with France. It did not stipulate that Alexander was to go further than a diplomatic rupture, and by this time he had probably learned what value to place on the statements of his new ally, who in his previous correspondence with Alexander professed to desire peace with Austria, while all the time he was pushing her to extremities. He also said that Spain had really submitted to the French, and desired Fouché to insert this falsehood in the French and Dutch newspapers, and added that 80,000 Spaniards were destroyed, and that Murat had landed in Sicily with 30,000 men.

While outwardly showing Alexander the greatest respect, Napoleon gave scope to the vexation he felt at his opposition by several modes of annoyance, as if to remind him of the

French power, and prove that he would find his alliance a greater personal support than the loyalty of his own subjects. A part of the French army was returning in separate regiments from Prussia, and had been ordered to march by Erfurt, where Napoleon reviewed them. He asked Alexander to accompany him, and mounted him on a horse which was full of tricks, and taught to keep in the rear of the one he rode himself. Arrived in front of the regiment formed in close column, he said to the officers, "Les braves en avant," and immediately a number of officers and privates stepped forward and formed a semicircle, while the Emperors dismounted, and Napoleon pressed Alexander and Constantine to come closer to his right hand that they might listen while he questioned the men as to their services, and hear how many Russians they had killed, who had captured a cannon at Friedland, or driven a battery into the water, for it was this regiment that had determined the fate of that terrible battle. "Napoleon listened to all attentively," says Baron Muffling, who was present, "and then decreed promotion or the Legion of Honour, which Berthier wrote down. As each person stepped forward in succession, he repeated the same question, to embarrass or torture the Emperor Alexander. All eyes involuntarily turned upon the Emperor as he stood beside Napoleon with the calmest bearing, until the last of the heroes to be rewarded had vaunted his achievements. Constantine withdrew from the circle to inspect a battery. The Russians and Germans naturally viewed Napoleon's conduct as brutal and revolting, but disapprobation was to be read on many faces around Napoleon."

The representation of Corneille's play of "Cinna" and Voltaire's "Death of Cæsar" was forbidden in Paris after Napoleon's accession to power, but "Cinna, or the Clemency of Augustus," was one of the first pieces he ordered to be performed on his arrival at Erfurt. In this play there is constant reference to the murder of Julius Cæsar; the conspirators excuse themselves by saying he was a tyrant, and are pardoned by his mild successor. The box of the two Emperors was in front of the first tier facing the stage, but Napoleon soon found that Alexander could neither hear nor see the actors at that distance; he therefore ordered his chamberlain, Count Stémunat, to have a platform constructed and placed over the

pit, exactly on a level with the orchestra, with two arm-chairs for the Emperors, and seats to the right and left for the King of Saxony and the other sovereigns and princes in attendance. Constantine was ill, and took no further part in the conference of Erfurt.

The play of "Cinna" was followed by Racine's "Mithridates," whose capital was seated in the Crimea, where he committed suicide in despair at the treachery of his eldest son, who headed an insurrection against him, to force him to give up his throne. "Andromache," "Zaire," "Bajazet," and Voltaire's "Edipus" were also performed. When the line which occurs in the last was recited, "The friendship of a great man is the gift of the gods," the audience, led by a few previously instructed, thundered applause, and Alexander turning to Napoleon, who was half asleep, or affecting to be so, roused him, to hear what was going on, for he could not catch the words himself. This simple act has been improved upon by servile or inaccurate writers,* till the incident has assumed much greater proportions. In the middle of the conference the whole party adjourned for a night to Weimar, where Napoleon ordered "Le Mort de César" to be acted the evening of their arrival, as he said to please the Duchess of Saxe-Weimar. The Emperors were placed close in front of the stage, as at Erfurt. In this play, Brutus, the chief of the conspirators, is made out to be Cæsar's son; and Antony, declaiming on this fact as lending additional horror to the assassination, gives the following description of Cæsar's dying words:—

"César, le regardant d'un œil tranquille et doux,
Lui pardonnait encore en tombant sous ses coups.
Il l'appelait son fils, et ce nom cher et tendre
Est le seul qu'en mourant César ait fait entendre.
O mon fils ! disait-il.
Un Romain. O monstre ! que les dieux
Devaient exterminer avant ce coup affreux."

"Cæsar, regarding him with a calm and gentle eye,
Pardoned him even while falling under his blows.
He called him his son; and this dear and tender name
Was the only one that Cæsar uttered when dying.
O my son ! said he.
A Roman. O monster ! whom the gods
Must exterminate before this frightful blow !"

* In Napoleon's court everything was arranged as for a stage effect, nothing was spontaneous; and the reports of proceedings were often

On the day of the arrival of the Sovereigns at Weimar, there was a stag hunt in the forest of Ettersburg, where Alexander fired a gun for the first time since he had been Emperor, for he was too soft-hearted to find any amusement in hunting or shooting, and he killed a stag with one shot. The hunt was followed by a dinner at the castle, a short concert, then the theatre and a ball. The following day Napoleon wished to show Alexander the field of Jena, and taking him over it, entered into a minute description of the different points of the battle. Not a single word was lost on his ally. The Russian troops in the last century were accustomed to fight with only Poles and Turks, who were chiefly cavalry, and their system of arraying their troops in close squares was introduced to accommodate themselves to these particular opponents. The plan of Frederick was admirably suited for the troops to which he was especially opposed, who were strong in infantry but weak in artillery; but proved inefficient before the powerful artillery and enormous masses which Napoleon could bring up as soon as he had ascertained the enemy's weakest part. Manœuvre, espionage, and a very active infantry, added to a constant superiority of numbers, was too much for the most determined courage, led by the smallest proportion of educated men. Alexander clearly saw all this, and was carefully studying the subject, though he wished to avoid another campaign: but Napoleon might at last have said, like Charles XII., that "his victories had taught the Russians the art of war."*

On leaving the field of Jena, the Imperial party adjourned to a déjeuner under a tent; they then attended a hare hunt at Weimar, and afterwards returned to Erfurt.

"At the hare hunt," says Muffling,† "Berthier insisted that deep holes should be dug for the shooters. The soundness of his reasons was apparent in the course of the day's sport.

copied down from the orders previously given. It completed the scene, which would otherwise have been imperfect, to make Alexander take a part, but it is not mentioned by any authority. Another equal fabrication is the story that in going into dinner Alexander found he had forgotten his sword, &c. A sword was not a necessary part of a Russian officer's uniform, and they rarely wear them off duty.

* At Pultova, in consequence of a skilful movement on the part of the Russians, Charles made this remark.

† Muffling's Passages in My Life.

Napoleon and Alexander stood side by side; the French marshals on the right and left. When the first hare was started all the marshals disappeared in their deep holes, and Napoleon fired away indiscriminately at the supports of his empire, at the hares and beaters. After the sport was over and the guns were packed up, when, in answer to Berthier's question, I said we had no wounded, he exclaimed 'Thank God !' "

At the Castle of Weimar, Goethe and Wieland were introduced to Napoleon, and on a subsequent evening he addressed them both, immediately after Alexander, and before any one else, an honour which, combined with the information that Napoleon looked upon him as a *man*, made Goethe his obsequious adherent. The aged Wieland was allowed to stand an hour in his presence, and when he asked to retire from fatigue, Napoleon treated it as an unwarrantable liberty.

Whenever Alexander called on his ally, timely warning was given by a guard posted in the street, and Napoleon descended to the foot of the staircase hat in hand to receive him. "He evidently intended," says Muffling, "to gain Alexander to his ends by marked personal attention;" but his open flattery displeased his guest. At the ball at Weimar, he told him that he had never seen any one dance so well; on which Alexander answered, "I cannot return the compliment;" and Napoleon being really a bad dancer, it silenced further personal remarks. He took pains to ingratiate himself with the Russians. He talked much to Speranski, who left Erfurt charmed with the French alliance. Alexander, on his part, paid great attention to the smaller German princes—to his brother-in-law, the Hereditary Duke of Baden, whom he met for the first time, and his wife, the Princess Stephanie, who at that period was not very happy with her husband. His uncle, the King of Würtemberg, had left St. Petersburg when Alexander was a child, and had since married the eldest daughter of George III. He was now the stoutest man in Europe, a gourmand, with a violent temper, and a strong adherent of the French interests. There did not seem to be much cordiality between him and his Imperial nephew. Alexander was more attracted towards

the King of Bavaria, his brother-in-law ; but he had little reason to be friendly with any of the princes of Western Germany, who had deserted him just as he had involved himself in war for their cause ; and it was evidently only intimidation which could now detach them from France.

Alexander left Erfurt, October 14th, to return through Poland to Russia. Napoleon accompanied him as far as the spot where they met September 27th : they dismounted from their horses, and walked on together for a few minutes, leaving the carriage to follow them in which Alexander was to pursue the rest of his journey ; then saluted each other, and separated for the remainder of their lives. Napoleon rode slowly back to Erfurt, and Alexander drove with his usual speed towards his own dominions, where it greatly relieved his subjects to see him arrive among them in safety.*

Neither of the Emperors obtained all he wished at the conference, and both must have felt it was only policy which preserved the alliance. Alexander had gained experience in the fourteen months since they last met, and Napoleon saw a more dangerous rival than he anticipated in the depressed and disappointed young man whom he entertained at Tilsit, filled with the horrors of a most sanguinary campaign, imagining himself the instrument of an evil destiny, and indignant

* Lord Holland says, on Talleyrand's authority, that at Erfurt he ventured secretly to apprise the Emperor of Russia that the object of the interview was to engage him in a confederacy against Austria, and even went so far as to advise him to avoid coming to Erfurt. "Some differences, amounting to altercations, took place between Napoleon and Alexander. When the conferences at Erfurt had closed, and the two carriages were drawn up to the door in different directions, to convey the two Emperors to their respective dominions, Talleyrand whispered to Alexander, as he went downstairs, 'Ah ! si votre majesté pouvait se tromper de voiture.'" In this instance Talleyrand apparently invented an anecdote to make an Englishman believe he had been opposed throughout to policy contrary to Great Britain ; for Alexander and Napoleon rode on horseback together for several miles out of Erfurt. Talleyrand did not accompany them ; and Napoleon also returned on horseback to Erfurt, and did not leave for France at the same time that Alexander set off to Russia. Such inaccuracies must always throw doubt on an improbable statement, when related by an unscrupulous individual like the French minister, who on this occasion profited by the interview to arrange a marriage between his nephew and the Duchess of Courland, a Russian heiress. *Champagny writes again to Napoleon, October 8th, "A conference of two hours with Count Romanzov has led to no result. His system appears to be unalterably firm. He wants the Turkish provinces ; and he wants them rather to-day than to-morrow."*

with the Allies, whom he thought purposely drew him into a snare to his destruction. All the golden visions then placed before him as the result of a French alliance had vanished, leaving nothing but the discontent of his people, and the knowledge, too late forced upon him, that far from being able to realize in union with France the generous dreams of his youth, a continuance of Napoleon's friendship would only involve a course of perfidy, and oppression of the weaker States, or constant diplomatic disputes, if they led to nothing more. The possession of Wallachia and Moldavia was the rescue of a Christian country oppressed for its religion from the hands of barbarians. Under the protection of Russia, Servia was shaking off the Turkish suzerainty, and assisted by the Russian generals was establishing a just administration throughout the province. It was not merely ambition which should prevent her leaving these pashaliks to the mercy of their former masters. But the alliance with France was actually a bar to any termination of the Turkish war; for the councils of England now prevailed over the Divan, and Napoleon had no influence on the Danube or beyond the shores of the Adriatic. It was indeed a hollow alliance, where both were interested in maintaining each other's weakness. "The only absolute engagement the treaty imposed on Alexander was the acknowledgment of the new order of things established by France in Spain;" but who does not see that, far from imposing upon him any sacrifice, this engagement could only fill him with joy? "In exchange for two provinces, the Czar ceded to us," says Lanfrey, "a country in revolt, a volcano in eruption, which was about to swallow up our armies and perpetuate our embarrassments. This fatal gift that Alexander offered to us with such a good grace could only leave him one regret—that he had not several Spains to give us."

With all these points of difference, Napoleon's version of the interview at Erfurt, as related by Las Cases and Thibadeau, seems to contain as little truth as his stories about Josephine wishing to adopt a child as his heir, and others relating to historical incidents, with which he beguiled his leisure at St. Helena. At Erfurt, he said, "we were like two young men of good society, whose pleasures were in common, and who hid nothing from each other. If the affection of Alex-

ander was sincere for me, it was intrigue which has alienated him from me. M—— or others, at the instigation of T——, have constantly, at favourable moments, repeated to him jokes which they said I had made at his expense, assuring him that at Tilsit and at Erfurt he had no sooner turned his back than I made myself merry with regard to him. Alexander is very susceptible. They might easily have embittered him. Nothing was more false. He pleased me, and I loved him.”* After speaking of the Emperor Francis, “whose good nature is well known, and who will always be the dupe of intrigues,” and the King of Prussia, whom he calls an honest good man, but timid, and naturally inclined to lean on the strongest, he said, “As for the Emperor of Russia, he is a man infinitely superior to all that: he has intelligence, grace, and information, is fascinating, but one should mistrust him; he is without frankness; he is a true Greek of the Lower Empire! At the same time he is a metaphysician, real or assumed. You would hardly believe how I have argued with him. He maintained that hereditary right was an abuse in sovereignty, and I have passed more than an hour, and used all my eloquence and my logic to prove to him that this hereditary right was the repose and the happiness of nations. Perhaps he wished to mystify me, for he is sharp, false, and penetrating. He can go to great lengths. If I die here he will be my real heir in Europe. I alone could stop him with his deluge of Tartars.” On another occasion Napoleon said, that “the King of Würtemberg is a man of considerable talent, but unprincipled and wicked. He and Alexander are the only sovereigns in Europe possessed of talents.” Again, he spoke with more acrimony of the King of Prussia, and said of Alexander, “He is the only one of the three (Alexander, Francis, and Frederick William) who has any talents. He is plausible, a great dissembler, very ambitious, and a man who studies to make himself popular.”† An unbiassed judgment could hardly be expected from Napoleon at that period, when he had just been hurled from the height for which he had sacrificed all his life and every principle of honour, by the man whom he now

* *Las Cases.*

† O'Meara. Napoleon, when talking to Englishmen, followed his usual custom of trying to make allies mistrust each other.

professed to describe;* and to excuse himself he tried to prove that he had been deceived; but in a conversation later on with the same biographer, he asserts that it was surrounding influences which led to the final war between France and Russia, and that neither he nor Alexander wished for it; and when he also expressed a regret that he had not given himself up a prisoner to Russia rather than to England, for the Emperor was a generous man, who would have taken a pleasure in treating him well, it is difficult to believe he really supposed him to be false; else how could he have felt certain of his mode of treatment? Had he forgotten that when he was older than Alexander, at Erfurt, he had sworn allegiance to a republican government, and was warm in its support and in his protestations against the tyranny of hereditary sovereignties? Was he on his part never sincere in that allegiance, and having deceived others by professing theories he did not hold, thought that those who still maintained them were also practising deceit? But the reason that it galled him was, that it opposed the motive he gave for wishing to divorce Josephine and marry into Alexander's family, in the hope of having a direct successor. A divorce was a sin in the eyes of religious Russians, and Napoleon's only hope of obtaining the hand of the Grand Duchess was to represent his reason for discarding a devoted wife to the Empress-Dowager as a great State necessity, and not a mere matter of caprice.

England's answer to the joint letter from Erfurt arrived at St. Petersburg almost immediately after Alexander's return. He replied that, "he had no difficulty in at once admitting the Sovereigns in alliance with England to a congress, but that he could not admit the Spanish insurgents. The Russian Empire has always acted on this principle; and its Emperor is now in an especial manner called to adhere to it, as he has already acknowledged Joseph as King of Spain." The French Minister of Foreign Affairs stated in his note that "France was irrevocably united to Russia," so that England had no hope of contending successfully against her armies on the Continent. A letter was intercepted by the English from Champagny to

* According to Las Cases, Napoleon considered the term *niais* (a simpleton) to mean an honest man, so that with him false and cunning might mean a clever one.

Bonaparte when in Spain. The writer says (December 11th, 1808) that Romanzov is as devoted as a Frenchman to the interests of France, and sincerely desires the return of Napoleon to Paris, where he is at present. That he (Romanzov) has shown him a letter of four pages he lately received from Alexander, who informs him, the reply of the English Government deprives him of almost all hope of a speedy peace; but that he thinks it is of importance to keep a door open for negotiation, and to go forward with it, whatever may be the ultimate success. He expressed himself as much disappointed that Austria had refused to acknowledge Joseph as King of Spain. "What will she do when he is enthroned at Madrid? It is by disobliging us that she pretends to merit complaisance." He does not see what end she is pursuing, for "her conduct is full of contradictions." He speaks of the double-dealing of her ministers, Metternich, Stadion, &c., and says that "she has shown distrust of Russia with regard to the interview at Erfurt, where, far from trying to weaken her, he had expressly stipulated for the integrity of her dominions," &c. But Austria was now resolved on war. In November Prince Schwartzberg came to St. Petersburg to obtain a permanent alliance with Russia, by a marriage between the Archduke Charles and one of the Grand Duchesses, and to request the Emperor's assistance in a projected campaign against France. At the meeting at Erfurt, Napoleon declined to allow Metternich, the Austrian Prime Minister, to attend, which had naturally excited suspicion; although he had received General Vincent very graciously when he brought a flattering letter from the Emperor Francis to assure Napoleon of his desire for peace. Vincent saw enough at this meeting to convince him that the French and Russian alliance was not sound, and his Cabinet thought it might detach Alexander. Schwartzberg enlarged on the miseries of Prussia, and France's enormous increase of power if she conquered Spain. He afterwards stated that Alexander blushed when told that the security obtained by his alliance had prompted the treacherous capture of the royal family. But the mission failed. Alexander had given his word to Napoleon at Erfurt, and would not draw back from it. Yet it was an opportunity he must have been sorry to lose, in spite of the Austrian want of faith on previous occasions. England

promised her co-operation in Belgium and Spain ; and as the price of his alliance he might have exacted most favourable terms for himself as to his recently acquired possessions in Finland and on the Danube. Napoleon's breach of the articles of the treaty of Tilsit furnished him with a cause, and he would have been hailed as a deliverer by Prussia. Poland was dissatisfied, and Holland was being ruined by her connection with France. It might have restored the alienated affections of his subjects, and Alexander felt his reign was so far a disappointment. Without Russia, France would have been powerless, harassed as she was by the Peninsular campaign ; and only his pledged word stood in the way of the liberation of Europe. Such was the idea of those sanguine German statesmen who thought this was the very moment for declaring against France, for without Russia, Prussia would not stir. "This Alexander was born as a curse to Prussia," wrote Gneisenau to Stein, who, in the bitterness of his heart, thought Alexander feared the preponderance of Germany, and wished it to remain in its present humiliation—an unjust notion he afterwards retracted. The Prussian ministers urged their King to join with Austria, but Frederick William mistrusted his army, and confided in Alexander, though Stein tried to convince him that he trusted to a broken reed. In St. Petersburg there was extreme agitation. "The Emperor knows," writes De Maistre, December, 1808, "that he universally displeases. A Russian nobleman by no means religious said to me, this reign is cursed. It began by —— &c." They talked openly of "the Asiatic remedy" as the only means of restoring Russia to her predominating influence in Europe. Again he writes, January 17th, 1809, "The Emperor is extremely good and humane. He does not like to sadden anybody. He is capable of pardoning personal injuries of which he has the proofs in his hand : he does not like luxury and display ; perhaps he hardly likes it enough ; he is singularly the friend of probity, which marches straight forward on the straight line without intrigues ; and besides, full of universal justice. He is accused of being mistrustful, and he is so to excess, but he is surrounded by men who do not merit his confidence. His maxims seem to fail when brought into practice, for there is a general curse on all his affairs."

The King and Queen of Prussia left Königsberg December 27th, 1808, to pay a visit to Alexander in his own capital. They were met by Count Lieven with a noble escort at the frontier, and presents of rich travelling pelisses of the most costly fur for the Sovereigns and their principal attendants. With all Napoleon's love of regal display, he was not received with such magnificence at any place between Paris and Erfurt as the humiliated King and Queen at every point of their journey to St. Petersburg. Illuminations, detachments of cavalry, and deputations from the nobility of the provinces, royal salutes, balls, and reviews filled up the early morning and late evening at almost each stage of their road, a distance from the Russian frontier to its capital of 350 English miles. Alexander met them first at Constantine's palace at Strelna, where they were to pass the night (January 6th). He spent the evening with them, and returned to St. Petersburg to receive them the next day, when they made their solemn entrance in the midst of 32,000 troops, all drawn up under arms. Constantine rode at the left of their carriage, holding a naked sword, and a procession of Russian courtiers, headed by the two Empresses, met them in the first ante-room of the Winter Palace. They were lodged in the Hermitage, where the Queen had twelve splendidly furnished rooms allotted to her especial use. The Grand Chamberlain Narishkin, the Countess Tolstoi, and three other Russian ladies were appointed to attend her, and in the evening there was an illumination throughout the whole city.

As soon as the Empress heard from her son that Napoleon intended to send a formal proposal to her daughter, she concluded her engagement with her cousin Prince George of Oldenburg, and on the Russian New Year's Day the marriage was solemnized in the chapel of the Winter Palace. The Sovereigns of Prussia were present at the ceremony, and prolonged their visit to the 31st, enjoying the gaieties of the season at St. Petersburg. Napoleon was much annoyed by this reception, for the North German papers were filled with accounts of the entertainments, and of the Turkish shawls, jewels, furs, and orders presented by the Emperor to the royal pair. Alexander accompanied them part of their way home in a single open sledge, as he was going to visit Riga, and

a ball at Mittau was their last fête before they quitted Russia.

Stein had long given some uneasiness to Napoleon by his efforts to raise Prussia from the depths of poverty to which she was reduced ; and when the latter heard that the King was at St. Petersburg, he sent a peremptory order to him to dismiss his minister and confiscate his estates. Frederick William wrote from Russia, January 16th, 1809, to inform Stein of this decree, but added, "The Emperor Alexander will give you an asylum in his States if you enter by Galicia." The unhappy King dared not even give him a passport to Russia. At the same time a passage appeared in the *Moniteur*, dated from Madrid, "One Stein, seeking to excite troubles in Germany, is declared the enemy of France and of the Confederation of the Rhine. The property which the said Stein may possess, whether in France or in the territory of the Confederation, shall be sequestered. The said Stein shall be arrested wherever he can be found by our troops, or by those of our allies." Stein went to Prague, hoping to serve Austria in her war with France, but his sister was seized by the French police in Prussia, and carried to Paris in his place.* When peace was concluded between Austria and France, he removed to a remote village near Memel.

The King hoped after his return from St. Petersburg to take his family back to Berlin, but on the discovery of a French plot to kidnap his eldest son as a hostage for Prussia remaining quiet during the Austrian war, he resolved to stay at Königsberg, as the short distance from Potsdam to the frontier would give additional facilities for such a scheme.† Madame de Staël, writing from Geneva, January, 1809, says, "It is generally thought there will be war with Russia in August ;" and Napoleon, in his annual message to the Senate, informed them that, "though he had no doubt of the Emperor's personal sentiments, he had yet reason to fear that the Russian Senate and nobles had been bought by English gold."

All the loss and inconvenience of the war between England and the Czar had certainly fallen on Russia, for directly it was about to be declared the English cruisers seized on every Russian merchant vessel, or goods suspected of belonging to

* Pertz's Memoirs of Stein.

† Sir G. Jackson.

Russian owners, which they could find before there was time for them to reach a port of safety ; while the period allowed by treaty to the British ships to clear out of the harbours of Russia prevented a rouble's worth of confiscated goods being added to the revenues of the Czar's Empire. Napoleon never attempted with success to obtain refugees from Russia.* She asserted her right to be the protector of the unfortunate, and French and German political exiles still resorted there for safety ; collections were made for them in St. Petersburg, and their sorrows enlisted a sympathizing Russian public in their cause. The Comte de Blacas, Louis XVIII.'s representative at the Court of St. Petersburg, remained in receipt of his pension from Russia, and there was quite an Italian colony, headed by the Comte de Maistre, the representative of the dethroned King of Sardinia, supported at Alexander's expense. All these kept up a constant agitation for another war with France. No people are more easily led by generous impulses, however contrary to their own interests, than the Russian nobles with regard to foreign politics ; and the attack on Finland was an unpopular measure, because it was supposed to have been only undertaken at the desire of France.

Alexander while at Erfurt received a letter from Gustavus IV., assuring him that the Russian forces were in a desperate condition, and he had better resign his conquests. Finland was in fact conquered, and General Kamenski, when he resigned the command, told his successor Knorring, that, as they had already subdued Finland, he had nothing to do but to keep it. But Gustavus was resolved to spend his last ducat if necessary in reconquering it. He compelled the inhabitants of the Aland Islands to emigrate to Sweden, so that these stepping-stones between Finland and Sweden were reduced to deserts.

The mode in which the small Russian army was kept supplied and in good health, in the midst of the excessive cold of a northern winter, reflected great credit on the Russian administration ; and if Aratchaief had been Minister of War during the campaign of 1806-7, it might have had more brilliant success. Buxhowden and Knorring raised so many difficulties about carrying out the Emperor's favourite idea of compelling

* Caulaincourt.

Gustavus to sign a peace by an attack on Stockholm across the ice, that he sent Aratchaief to the seat of war to find out the real difficulties. Bagration, Shouvalov, and Barclay de Tolly were all ready; the first to march across the ice to the Aland Islands; the second to proceed further north towards Tornea; and the third to conduct an army from Vasa to Umea, on the Swedish coast, over the part of the Gulf of Bothnia called the Quarken; and this he accomplished in seven days, bivouacking on the ice at night, and captured the town of Umea, which contained a large reserve of magazines and stores. General Koulnef effected a landing at Grisselhamm, on the Swedish coast, opposite Aland; and the Swedes, from even Stockholm and Upsal, packed up their goods to fly into the interior of the country. A body-guard of 4000 young Swedes of high rank was ordered by the King to attack 12,000 Russians, and on refusing to do so cashiered. This act, and the impending danger, brought matters to a crisis. The King was arrested by some of his nobles, March 13th, 1809, and compelled to abdicate his crown, which, on May 10th, was transferred by the Diet to his uncle, the Duke of Sudermania, who succeeded as Charles XIII.

The very day of Gustavus's arrest, Alexander left St. Petersburg for Finland, where he opened the Diet at Borgo in person, and received the oath of allegiance. He confirmed all the privileges of the inhabitants, and decreed that the pay of the Government officials and the taxes should be the same as before; but while formerly the revenue enriched Sweden, it was now, and during the rest of his reign, spent entirely in the province. He made himself so popular among his new subjects, that only five years afterwards an English traveller visiting Finland was surprised to find the people as loyal to the Czar, and as favourably impressed by his qualities as a ruler, as they had ever been to the old Swedish Kings, though they retained an hereditary antipathy to the Russian nation. The King's dethronement relieved them of all difficulty in taking the oath, and Alexander introduced the representative institutions which ruled Sweden at that time; for Finland had been governed hitherto as a merely dependent province. The Diet which he convoked was divided into four orders—clergy, nobility, citizens, and peasants. It was to be called

for three years at least, and might be maintained indefinitely, at the will of the Sovereign, in the exercise of its senatorial functions. An article of the Swedish constitution did not fix the time for the convocation of the Diet, leaving it to the arbitrary will of the Sovereign. In virtue of this article the Diet was never convoked a second time during Alexander's reign. Finland was prospering under the governor he had appointed ; and as there were troubles enough in other parts of his empire, and Sweden was occupied by an ambitious King, he was glad to let it alone as long as the province was quiet.

Negotiations for peace began immediately after Gustavus's imprisonment, and an offer was made to Alexander that the new King, who was childless, would appoint one of his brothers or Prince George of Oldenburg as his successor if the Duchy of Finland was restored. Alexander refused it, and two more obstinate battles were gained by the Russians, at Ratan and Sevara in Sweden, before the Swedes would accept the required terms of peace. But at last the treaty of Fredericksham was signed in Finland by Count Romanzov, September 17th, 1809, by which Sweden agreed to declare war against England, and Finland and Aland were finally annexed to Russia.

The news of the King's deposition caused a great sensation in St. Petersburg, particularly in the Imperial family, by whom it was quite unexpected, and some commiseration was felt for his fate. He was kept the whole summer at the Castle of Gripsholm, most of the time in company with his wife and children ; but in December was allowed to leave the country, when he went in disguise to Riga, and thence made his way to Leipzig and other parts of the Continent. He refused a pension Alexander offered him ; and his wife, who had suffered much from his ill-humour during his imprisonment, now took measures to obtain a divorce. Accompanied by her two children, she joined her mother in Baden, where for some years she was an invalid from the effects of a carriage accident ; and they lived more quietly, and at less expense, than many a private family. Her sister, the Duchess of Brunswick, came to Baden after the loss of her husband's territory, and died there in 1808, when the old Margravine took charge of her children. Speranski was employed during 1809 in the provisional government of Finland, and on his return transferred to the depart-

ment of finance; but he continued his labours on the new legal code, and corresponded with Baron Locré, the Secretary-General of the French State Council, to ascertain if the French system was in any way suitable to Russia, with a view of introducing the code arranged by the philosophers of the French Republic, which Napoleon, after he became Emperor, adopted and called by his own name.

In 1808 the naturalist Langsdorff was sent to explore the district of Central Asia, and ascertain its agricultural capacities. The same year a canal was finished, connecting Lake Peipus with the Gulf of Finland, and a new life-boat invented in Denmark was immediately adopted at all the ports in Russia. It was an inopportune moment for reviving the question of the emancipation of the serfs—a project so distasteful to the nobility that the committee which was sitting throughout the year 1807, to prepare a mode of effecting it, came to no other conclusion than its impossibility; but by another ukaz of November 26th, 1809, Alexander confirmed his father's law, ordaining that they should be allowed three days a week to work on their own account, and issued penalties against those proprietors who sold a serf without land or away from his family. He established this year a colony of free serfs in a village containing twenty-four handsome wooden houses, with a watch-tower in the centre, between St. Petersburg and Czarco-Selo; and a rumour was revived that he meant not only to interfere with the privileges of the nobles, by depriving them of their human property, but to tie them down to observe the laws, by establishing a constitutional government. Even Karamsin, the historian, a favourite of the Court, where he read his history aloud before the Sovereigns, said that old nations did not want new laws.* “The nobles are less liberal than the Emperor,” was

* The voice of the Princess Dashkov, who died the next year, aged sixty-eight, was once more heard from her retreat in Moscow, where she lived, surrounded by courtiers of the time of Catherine and Elizabeth. Her Memoirs were being sent to London for publication, and were examined on the frontier, much to her indignation. “I have written to the Emperor,” she sends word to a friend, “to tell him that my ardent love for my country, and the personal attachment I have shown to him from his tenderest infancy, ought to put me above suspicion. I added several other truths, such as a bad choice of viziers, who, in their turn, make use of corrupted bashaws, &c. In answer, I received that the

Madame de Staël's observation, after a fortnight's residence in St. Petersburg. A Spanish officer who entered the Russian service in 1816, found that the Russian officers never associated with any of the mercantile class ; even the richest and most highly educated of the English merchants would not have been received in their society. Consequently, a foreigner entering the Russian military service had to break off intercourse with his old mercantile acquaintance. The Emperor tried to throw down this barrier, by inviting both foreign and Russian merchants to the fêtes at the Winter Palace, and calling like a private gentleman at the houses of those merchants who were noted for their benevolence or their aid to the government charities. From them he obtained a knowledge of the requirements and domestic economy of the trading and working classes, which his own education would never have supplied ; and tried to ascertain for himself how far it was practicable to give liberty and self-dependence to the serfs. He was much interested to see the difference in the houses of his German officers, with their thrifty, industrious wives, and those of the Russians of the same class ; and when he entered he would request them to go on with their occupations, and give him an insight into "home life." De Maistre records* the death of the wife of a German merchant, Madame Cramer, who for many years was conspicuous for her kindness to the poor in St. Petersburg. "A remarkable woman of her class has died from a blow on the head, falling out of a sledge. I did not visit her, but I willingly met her. She was a woman of great merit, who passed her life in good actions, and was the most active instrument of the society of charitable ladies. The Emperor honoured her with a very flattering esteem, and sometimes came to pass the evening at her house : he went to see her in her last illness. This is not unprecedented, for the Emperor honours other houses of the same order, by coming to pass a few moments there in the evening. Stifled with

scrutiny was what is doing with every one going out of the country ; that there was not any personality, and that he had nothing so much at heart as my tranquillity ; and that this was intimated to Toutholmine (the deputy-governor in Moscow) to be diligent to have all lawful measure done for my satisfaction and repose."

* April 19th, 1816.

business, he comes to breathe in a domestic circle; fatigued with masques, he seeks faces. More than once it has been asked why he does not grant the same favour to houses of the first order; but these questions are obviously very foolish. For myself, I own I do not see, without great interest, the Emperor of all the Russias, in the age of every enjoyment, take tea without ceremony with an honest woman and her husband." In Russia, as in most Oriental countries, it was an especial mark of favour in a person of rank to touch food in the house of an inferior; and when it is remembered that so many of Alexander's predecessors had died a violent death, and that his own life seemed constantly threatened; when also everything that his father and grandmother had eaten or drunk while they occupied the throne was carefully tasted beforehand by an official to avoid poison, it is not surprising that it was considered an extraordinary confidence and condescension when he drank tea with a merchant.

"It was necessary," said Caulaincourt, relating in after years the agitation prevailing throughout 1809-10 in Russia, "that Alexander should conquer Napoleon, under pain of losing his crown and life. His long resistance to break with France, by raising suspicions in all classes, alienated them from him. In the heart of his States a formidable party existed, only waiting an occasion to precipitate from the throne the liberal Czar, who had dared to dream of the freedom of the serfs. To Alexander's predilection for Napoleon was attributed the ills that the continental system had drawn on commerce. These grievances, presented by a bold chief, would easily have drawn the masses. The higher classes made this the accusation to render it more popular; but this was only one pretext. In the last months of my residence at St. Petersburg he opened his uneasiness in our intimate conversation. The eternal enemy of France, Great Britain, sent to the Court of Russia secret councillors, who sowed the seeds of disaffection and discontent around the throne. The English Cabinet knew well that war *de propagande* would be impossible while Russia remained allied to France. All the Powers were agreed, all the Kings were perjured, one excepted; it was necessary to draw him with them, or to ruin him.

Alexander, at the epoch of which I speak, was already no longer the careless and frivolous young man. The gravity of events gathering in all parts gave him foresight, and he perfectly judged his personal position. Under a confidential exterior he disguised dark apprehensions. He said to me one evening, while leaning on the balcony of the Empress's boudoir: 'There is no one in my wide dominions to whom I can open my heart. I confide my secret uneasiness to your honour, and not to the ambassador of France. The Emperor Napoleon should know the feeling here against him. Tell him all that I have revealed to you and that you have seen and read. Tell him again that the earth trembles here under my feet; that in my own empire my position has become intolerable from his want of faith in treaties. Transmit to him from me this true and final declaration, that if we are only once more engaged in war, he, Napoleon, or I, Alexander, must lose his crown.' I have fulfilled the mission which has been confided to me," adds Caulaincourt. "I have supported reproaches. I have resisted, at the risk of bruising myself in the struggle that I sustained against the pretexts which served the war of 1812. While there was yet time, I repeated to him that this war could have only one fatal result for the country. You will ruin yourself, Sire, and France."

Caulaincourt felt so strongly the difficulty he was placed in by Napoleon's incessant evasions of his treaty with Russia, that at the meeting at Erfurt he pressed his master to recall him to France. Napoleon offered his embassy to Savary, who declined it, telling him that if he went again to Russia he should become the servant of Alexander instead of that of France. Caulaincourt was obliged to remain, as Napoleon dared not run the risk of sending a man who might be as much disliked by the Emperor as by his subjects, and entirely ruin the French cause in Russia.

The King of England's speech in December, 1808, on his refusal of the French and Russian offer of peace, informed Napoleon of Austria's armaments, and of her negotiations with the British Cabinet, even if he had not been already convinced of it; in spite of the protestations of the Emperor Francis, whose third wife, married nearly a year before, was as much disposed to war as her predecessor to peace. The

campaign was well fought ; but it was ill-timed, and the British co-operation in Flanders not sufficiently strong, and fitted out too late. Vienna was captured for a second time, and her ramparts razed to the ground. Gentz accuses Francis of being the chief cause of the Austrian calamities, as he was constantly imposing his narrow views and obstinate will on his councillors. It has been said of him that he resembled George III. without a parliament. The peace of Vienna was signed with France and Russia, October 14th, by which Austria lost territory containing 3,500,000 inhabitants, and agreed to dismiss all persons born in France, Belgium, or Northern Italy from her service.

Russia, according to promise, broke off diplomatic relations with Austria when she declared war against France, and moved an army of observation to defend her own frontiers if necessary. But Alexander stated that, with the wars in Finland and Wallachia still on his hands, he could not give his ally any active support. Napoleon knew that this would be the case : he had obtained at Erfurt Alexander's provisional promise to declare war, but nothing more ;* and if the French campaign had been an unbroken success he might not have complained. But at its commencement the Archduke Ferdinand marched direct upon Warsaw ; and Prince Poniatowski, one of Napoleon's generals commanding the Polish army, was not strong enough to prevent its capture. He intercepted a courier carrying a letter from Prince Gortchakof, one of the Russian generals, to the Archduke, congratulating him on his success, and he sent it in great indignation to Napoleon. It expressed a hope that the time might not be far distant when the writer could join his forces to those of Austria. Napoleon at once enclosed it to Alexander, demanding an explanation, which was given, that it was a private letter expressing private feelings, without any authority from the Government ; and Gortchakof was recalled. Napoleon dissembled his vexation, as he wished just then to keep on good terms with Russia. But he told Savary that he found he had gained nothing by the Russian alliance, and it was more than probable Alexander would have declared openly against him, " if a remnant of regard to the faith of treaties had not

* Treaty of Erfurt, Article 10.

prevented him." He wrote, through his foreign minister, to Caulaincourt, June 2nd : "The Emperor's feelings are hurt ; that is the reason why he does not write to the Emperor Alexander. He cannot express a confidence he does not feel. He says nothing, and does not complain. 40,000 men in the Duchy of Warsaw would have been a real service. Look upon your old instructions as cancelled. Seem satisfied, but do not commit yourself. From the very circumstance that the Emperor no longer believes in the Russian alliance, it is desirable that the rest of Europe should share his former delusion."

There was no real understanding between the Russian and Austrian Governments. But when the Russian commanders had so often fought against Poland and the French, it was not likely they would now put much private zeal in the cause of such allies. Alexander had already lost too many good troops to wish his soldiers to be sacrificed in a war quite apart from their interests, and gave them orders, which were openly exhibited to their allies, not to cross the Vistula ; a necessary precaution for the safety of Russia, as he had no reserve. But the Archduke Ferdinand, alarmed by the approach of the Russians under Prince Galitzin, evacuated Warsaw, which was occupied by the Polish militia under General Zajonshek ; and the Austrians threw themselves on Sandomir and captured it, although Poniatowski tried to induce the Russians to disobey Alexander's order so far as to cross the Vistula and hasten to its relief. He wrote to Napoleon that it was clear it was the Polish troops which the Austrians and Russians regarded as enemies. Yet when the Russians did possess themselves of the Austro-Polish town of Cracow, the Polish army following immediately on their steps were ready to attack them ; and were only prevented by Prince Galitzin's prudent withdrawal, leaving their old capital in the occupation of the Poles.

On the conclusion of an armistice, Francis wrote to Alexander and Napoleon, who communicated the letters to each other with apparent confidence ; but when the news arrived at St. Petersburg that Poniatowski had taken possession of the province of Galicia in the name of France, there was considerable excitement. "It is impossible," said Alexander to

Caulaincourt, "for Russia to submit to the establishment of a French province on her own frontier." "You may give me a certain pledge of your friendship," he wrote to Napoleon, "in repeating what you said at Tilsit and Erfurt on the interests of Russia in connection with the late kingdom of Poland, and which I have since charged my ambassador to confirm." "Poland," said Napoleon to Gorgoli, the officer who bore the despatches to St. Petersburg, "may give rise to some embarrassment between us, but the world is large enough to afford us room to arrange ourselves." "If the re-establishment of Poland as the dependency of France is to be brought forward," replied Alexander, "the world is not large enough. I should no longer wish to remain in it."* Bignon declares that the ferment was so prodigious at St. Petersburg, that it was openly said in some circles it would be better to die sword in hand or assassinate the Emperor, if he was disposed to yield, than to permit the re-union of Galicia to the Grand Duchy. In the end it was agreed that the circle of Tarnopol, a fourth of New Galicia, should be made over to Russia; that France should guarantee this new possession; that the rest of New Galicia should be given to Saxony, without using the word Poles or Poland; and that Austria should keep what she obtained by the partition of 1772. But the treaty of Vienna was still unsatisfactory, for if any portion of Galicia was separated from Austria, Russia wished it to be attached to her share of Poland. Napoleon vainly assured Alexander he had watched over his interests as if they had been his own, and that he "desired the name of Poland and of the Poles to disappear, not only from every political transaction, but even from history." Her greatest enemy was augmented evidently not without design, and another army marched into North Germany. However, Napoleon wrote to Berthier from the Trianon, December 17th, 1809: "Send positive orders to Spain that in the newspapers and returns the Polish division is not to be called the Polish division, but that of the Grand Duke of Warsaw." The instructions Caulaincourt was to look upon as cancelled were those he received on first entering on his embassy, that it was Napoleon's particular wish to keep Russia as an ally. It was therefore evident that, from the

* Bignon, viii. 351.

summer of 1809, if not before, he contemplated making an attempt to break her power unless Alexander was more willing to submit to his dictation. But there was still one chance of preserving the alliance.

It had been remarked for some time that Napoleon desired a younger and more beautiful bride than Josephine, who showed her West Indian blood by yielding rapidly to the advance of age. Their marriage never received the blessing of a priest; and though, when the Church was re-established in France, Napoleon insisted that the ecclesiastic who united his brother Louis to Hortense should give the nuptial benediction to Caroline and Murat, who had been civilly married for some little time, he declined to take any steps towards strengthening his own matrimonial ties. In 1802 she was aware that his brother Lucien had suggested a divorce to him. She told one of the State councillors that it was proposed to her to adopt a child of her husband's, and pass it off as her own, which she indignantly refused to do. "Bonaparte," she said, "is even carried away by those ideas. He is more weak and changeable than is generally imagined. Lucien has got an extraordinary dominion over him." The marriage of Louis and Hortense seemed to silence such notions for a time, as Bonaparte was prepared to adopt their eldest son as his successor. They had two more sons within a short period, and there seemed no reason why the elder of these should not be substituted for his deceased brother as the heir to the Imperial throne; but as Napoleon increased in power, and his title was acknowledged by most of the European Governments, he became ambitious to obtain the hand of a princess: he considered his plebeian origin a disadvantage, and thought an alliance with one of the legitimate royal families would give him a more equal place among his brother monarchs. At Tilsit* he mentioned the subject to Alexander, and one reason of his anxiety to meet him at Erfurt was that he might bring the matter forward once more. Then Alexander referred the proposal for his sister's hand to the Empress-Dowager, whom Napoleon well knew was his enemy. But immediately after the peace with Vienna he thought that the formidable bulwark he was raising on the frontier of Russia must alarm her

* Wellington called it the *real* secret article of Tilsit.

sufficiently to make her see that her safety required such a bond of friendship, and a week before he informed Josephine of his intention he wrote a letter in cipher to Caulaincourt (November 24th), telling him to open the project of a marriage with the Grand Duchess Anna to the Emperor Alexander in person. Savary says that Napoleon felt a personal regard for the Czar, in spite of his vexation at the conduct of the Russian army in the late campaign, and would gladly have availed himself of another opportunity of drawing closer the bonds of the Russian alliance. Savary was much in Napoleon's confidence, and at a reception in the Tuileries the Emperor told him to point out which of the ladies in the room most resembled the Grand Duchess Anna, being the only Frenchman present who had seen her. He was very impatient to receive Caulaincourt's answer; and also wrote to Alexander, who replied in his own hand that he was going to consult his mother. Alexander told Caulaincourt that the proposal was extremely agreeable to himself personally, and coincided with his political views; but an Imperial ukaz, as well as the last will of his father, left his sisters entirely at the disposal of his mother. "Her ideas," he said, "are not always in unison with my wishes nor with policy, nor even reason. If the affair only depended on me, you should have an answer before leaving this room." He conducted the matter with as much delicacy as possible, so as not to wound Napoleon, and represented that her extreme youth and inexperience did not make the Grand Duchess Anna such a suitable bride for him as her elder sister would have been. The young Empress was seized with a fit of jealousy lest her sister-in-law should see Paris before herself, for it was a great object of her ambition. Nevertheless, Alexander opposed his mother's scruples. "A princess of Russia," she replied, "is not to be wooed and won in a few days; two years hence it will be time enough to terminate such an affair." A Russian chapel and priest would, as a matter of course, be maintained at the Tuileries for a Russian bride. But ten days were required before any decisive answer could be sent.

Napoleon declared that to delay was to refuse, and before ten days had expired he began a secret negotiation with the Austrian ambassador, Prince Schwartzberg, who eagerly

embraced the idea of a matrimonial alliance with his Court. He called a Cabinet council to decide on the advantages of an Austrian and Russian connection, and said he would abide by the majority, which, being in favour of Austria, it was decided that Napoleon should marry an Austrian princess five days before the answer of Russia arrived, requiring two years' delay. The divorce was concluded ; Josephine retired on a handsome pension ; Napoleon and the Archduchess Maria Louisa of Austria were married by proxy at Vienna, March 11th, 1810. "She is not beautiful," said Napoleon to Josephine, "when he exhibited her picture, but she is the daughter of the Cæsars." Austria, who required a man to possess sixteen quarterings at least on his shield before he might appear at Court, was eager to give her daughter to an adventurer, to secure her empire from being reduced to the position of a third-rate power. Alexander observed when he heard of this marriage, that the next step would be to drive him back into his forests. He sent his congratulations, but told the French ambassador that Napoleon had not acted fairly in carrying on apparently two negotiations at once, as his final answer could not have reached Paris before the proposal to Austria had been accepted by her ambassador. He said it was fortunate the age of the Grand Duchess had been an obstacle, otherwise he should have reason to complain, as it was Napoleon who had introduced the subject both on this occasion and at Erfurt. He added, that he rejoiced at whatever was for the good of France, and this marriage would probably conduce to it ; but to one of his own councillors he was inclined to smile at Napoleon's assertion that he was sacrificing his dearest affections (in divorcing Josephine) for the interests of his empire. He sent old Prince Kurakin as his ambassador extraordinary to represent him at the wedding, which was followed by a frightful accident. The Austrian ambassador gave a ball, when the room caught fire, and several persons, including his sister-in-law, were burned to death. Kurakin was carried out insensible, and required medical attendance for several months. The diamond buttons which adorned his clothes habitually were all stolen by the crowd before he had revived to consciousness. "That fatal marriage ruined me," said Napoleon at St. Helena ; "I placed my foot on an abyss covered with flowers."

The recent events with regard to the Poles made Czartoriski, after a long separation, seek an interview with Alexander, who received him November 12th, 1809. "I began," he says, "by asking his pardon for my constant importunity in pleading the cause of a suffering people; not a very agreeable subject. I then spoke of the sequestered property of those Poles who had taken service in the Duchy of Warsaw.* The Emperor at once interrupted me, telling me that circumstances forced him to take these measures, that it was by the unanimous advice of his ministers; and besides, the conduct of the Poles made this severity necessary. He had received news from his ambassador at Paris, who wrote to him that the Poles in that city, though subjects of Russia, were making demonstrations and holding the most extraordinary conversations, quite enough to draw upon them the severity of the Government." Czartoriski pleaded that the ukaz was unjust, as they had not been warned of the effect of their conduct. The Emperor replied, that he intended to assign a delay for those who had entered the service before the ukaz. Czartoriski said that a Russian noble, if he entered a foreign service, would not have his property confiscated, as the law enacted that what he personally forfeited should still pass to his heirs. Why then should Poles be treated differently? The Emperor answered, there were circumstances in which the safety of the State required exceptions: the conduct of the Poles had provoked the measure, and he had only passed it by the unanimous advice of his ministers. He dwelt on this fact, as Czartoriski used formerly to complain that he followed his own lights rather than the opinion of his ministers. Czartoriski answered, he was not astonished that the ministers had no pity for the sufferings of so many families, but he had hoped the Emperor would entertain different sentiments. "The conversation turned for a moment, and I tried to bring it to M. de Novossilzof, and to a certain denunciation made against us both not long ago. As soon as the Emperor saw what I was driving at he cut me short, and said it was a past affair, and I was only mixed up in it indirectly, having remained quiet whilst M. de Novossilzof held the most extraordinary conversation in a place as public as an hotel. He referred to a

* Madame Choiseul Gouffier says that for years the Poles in arms against Russia had regularly drawn their revenues from Russian Poland.

dinner where the words attributed to M. de Novossilzof were uttered on the subject of the letter recently addressed by Napoleon to his Majesty. The Emperor was much irritated. I did my best to defend M. de Novossilzof, but it was useless. . . . As the Emperor had not appeared to understand what I said of the different manner in which M. de Novossilzof and myself judged Napoleon's letter, I explained that M. de Novossilzof looked at it as a Russian, and thought it sufficient to dispel all uneasiness, whilst I as a Pole had read it with grief. The Emperor asked me if I knew M. de Champagny's despatch, which was much stronger than the letter. I answered that, without having read it, I had heard it spoken of, and it pained me to know that the Emperor was now the chief persecutor of the Polish name; it was only to please him that Poland had been abandoned, deprived of all hope, and he had even carried his animosity so far as to wish her name to be effaced from history. The Emperor said it was not just to accuse him; his personal sentiments were not changed, they had been long known to me: the duties of his position were obligatory, and any chief of the Russian Empire would act in the same way. I replied, on this point I could not separate the two qualities united in the Emperor's person; he had himself allowed that the re-establishment of Poland might be accomplished, not only without injury to Russia, but to her great advantage, by the union of the two crowns on the head of his Majesty. The Emperor answered, that all that was true, but as it could not be accomplished, he must follow another line of conduct." Czarteriski said he could not understand this reasoning; there had been favourable moments for accomplishing it, and as he had let them escape he should now prepare for the future, and certainly not despoil the nation nor carry out rigorous measures. The Emperor, lowering his eyes and without finishing his sentence, said, "If at least we could hope for some return on the part of the Poles, and could be sure that they would not always conduct themselves the same." . . . "I asked the Emperor to remember all this country has suffered. Was there anything more revolting than the conduct of the three Powers with respect to Poland? And can we be astonished that the idea of seeing their country re-established should inflame and unite all the Poles? The boast in St. Petersburg,

that they are deprived of all hope, seems more likely to serve Napoleon than to do him harm, for it will throw all the odium of his conduct on the Emperor. No one will doubt now that it was at the request of your Majesty, and to avoid a war with Russia, that Napoleon yielded a point he would formerly have maintained, which has always been an object of solicitude to him, and this manner of seeing things will only embitter Polish hearts. Napoleon on his side will not remain inactive ; he will seek by promises and flattery to efface the momentary resentment they may feel against him. It must not be imagined," I added, "that his language is the same everywhere. The Emperor knows better than anybody that Napoleon can talk in the most opposite manner. He will tell the Polish division marching into Spain that it is the last service he will ask of them ; that it will complete their training in the art of war, and after that nothing will prevent him from fulfilling their wishes, that it is only necessity which has paralyzed him ; this Empire of Russia, their eternal enemy, who is the cause of it. By such speeches he will destroy all the bad effect of his conduct, and his words will be believed because they will flatter the hope of the nation, while on the other side nothing is done to counterbalance this impression."

The Emperor reminded Czartoriski of the feeling he had displayed at the conduct of the three Powers towards Poland ; he believed that all the evils to which Europe is now a prey dated from it, but it was no longer reparable. He saw no means of executing his old project on the subject of Poland, he only saw the possibility of a separate organization for the provinces actually under his rule ; but even in that there was much to be said, and he should meet with great opposition. Czartoriski answered, he well remembered the feeling he had shown for Poland ; his liberal sentiments had been the original cause of the bond between them. He could not judge of the difficulties Alexander alluded to, as he was ignorant if there had ever been a question of this project between him and Napoleon. "The chance of Napoleon opposing it," I said, "is the only difficulty I can see, and I am curious to know if, in the numerous conversations your Majesty has held with him, you ever touched on this subject." The Emperor said, "There had been a question of all that lately during the war with Austria.

Napoleon would never consent to such a thing, because his only idea was to maintain a constant influence over the Poles, in order to rule them and make them useful in his designs."

Czartoriski said that whatever any one might say, he believed a project for giving a separate organization to the Polish provinces belonging to Russia would be more opposed than the idea of reuniting Poland altogether, and his Majesty would remember this some day when it might be too late. Alexander answered, surely in case of a war with France he might declare himself King of Poland in order to gain some to his cause. "'It would be too late then,' I replied; and as the conversation had lasted long I said no more."

At the end of November, 1809, Alexander paid a visit to Moscow, where the nobles, to show their disapprobation of the French alliance, received him with marked coolness, but the loyalty of the lower classes was most demonstrative, and as he entered the city on horseback he was more than once obliged to stop from the pressure of the crowd. He was accompanied by his sister Catherine, whose husband, the Duke of Oldenburg, was appointed Governor of Tver, where the old episcopal palace was fitted up for them, and the Duchess's court was as strictly regulated as a convent. During the evenings the ancient history of Russia was read aloud, so that when Constantine came to stay with her he declared he learned more about his own country than he had ever known before. She taught her husband Russian, and presented him to the citizens on his first entrance into Tver, acting as their interpreter, and they both became very popular in the province. She had never seen Moscow before this visit in 1809. "With respect to the Prince," says De Maistre, "our young ladies do not think him good enough for his august spouse, but as that would be difficult, we may be of the opinion of the young ladies without failing in respect for him. In two or three conversations, he appeared to me sensible and well-informed." The Comte de Lagarde spoke of him after his early death as a man she could not love, yet Baron Stein says that the Prince showed him seventy letters his wife had written to him during two months' absence, and in the number several filled nine pages. General Moreau declared that she was the most remarkable woman he had ever met; and Napoleon used to say, that if he had married her she

would have held the reins of Government with a firm grasp whenever he was absent from France.

On Alexander's return from Moscow Czartoriski sent to request another interview ; and meeting him at dinner at the Empress-Dowager's, December 25th, the Emperor appointed it for the next day, as he also wished to speak to Czartoriski ; probably, thought the ex-minister, about the projected changes in the council which the Court and town were discussing. The Emperor asked him what he had to say. Czartoriski desired a prolonged leave of absence from his duties at Vilna. "The Emperor told me," he writes, "that he thought I might be glad to be actively employed while I was at St. Petersburg, and starting from that point he said that the council was going to take a new form, with more extended functions. He had consulted those existing in the best governed countries, such as France and England, for its organization. He had divided the council into four sections—war, the interior, finances, justice and laws ; and it was in the last he had assigned me a place. There was also a plenum (or committee) of the council, to which affairs would be transferred that had passed through the sections. I answered his Majesty that I was much honoured by the confidence he showed in me, but he well knew the reasons for which I asked my leave—the advanced age of my parents, from whom I had been long separated, and my health, which was not suited by the climate of St. Petersburg. . . . The Emperor then said he had decided to revoke the severe measures taken with respect to the Poles ; that the cause which had influenced these measures had ceased, and he had now reason to be easy. Czartoriski asked his reason for being easy, and if it was only this passage in the French minister's speech to the Corps Législatif at Paris, December 1st, 1809 : 'The Duchy of Warsaw is increased by a portion of Galicia. It would have been easy for the Emperor to unite the whole of Galicia to that State, but he has wished to do nothing which could give uneasiness to his ally, the Emperor of Russia. The Galicia of the old partition remains almost entirely in the power of Austria. His Majesty has never had in view the re-establishment of Poland. What he has done for New Galicia has been necessitated less by policy than honour. He could not abandon to the vengeance

of an implacable prince the people who had shown so much ardour for the cause of France.’” Czartoriski supposed that Alexander felt safe from Napoleon having engaged to do nothing towards the re-establishment of Poland; but the Emperor did not answer his question. They went on to talk of the new council. Alexander told him, with a smile, that “many people, not understanding the meaning of words, imagined the organization of the council was a national representation,* as if there could be a national representation not nominated by the country and not independent of the Crown. ‘My greatest desire,’ he added, ‘is to try and maintain peace outside, so as to occupy myself exclusively with the interior. This council is only a first step towards greater changes, about which my opinions have not altered.’ I expressed doubts as to the possibility of executing them; and his Majesty replied, ‘with time and perseverance they might advance very far.’” He then asked Czartoriski some questions about Poland.

Czartoriski replied by telling the Emperor that events had carried back the Poles to the state of feeling existing fifteen years before. Since then their hopes had sunk; they looked on their present existence as perpetual; but the creation of the Duchy of Warsaw, like the phantom of ancient Poland, had restored their patriotism. He spoke to him not as the Emperor, but as the youth who had sympathized with him in the days of Poland’s distress. The impression which the Duchy of Warsaw produced on his countrymen had the same effect on him. He could not avoid taking the warmest interest in it. Besides, his brother, his sisters, all his family lived there, and that was one of the reasons which made him wish to keep apart from the Russian Council of State.

The Emperor said his mode of explaining himself did him honour. He thought for a moment, and then added, “There are no other means for arranging our old project of giving a constitution and a separate existence to the kingdom of Poland, than attaching this title to the Crown of Russia. We must wait till Austria is foolish enough to provoke another war with France; then we might come to an understanding with Napoleon, and give a compensation to the King of Saxony.” The

* It was objected to by the Conservative party on that ground.

Emperor added that, "in the mean while it would have been well to proceed with the provinces actually belonging to Russia, and to take the title of Grand Duke of Lithuania; but being confronted by so skilful an antagonist as Napoleon, he feared to arouse his suspicions, and cause him to counteract Russia by the same means." Czartoriski asked if Alexander had ever touched on this point in conversation with Napoleon. He answered positively No; that at Tilsit Napoleon expressed himself with much levity on all concerning Poland and the Poles; and at Erfurt they had too much to do to occupy themselves with that. Czartoriski expressed himself astonished at the art with which Napoleon propagated and accredited at once the most contrary conjectures and opinions, for while writing despatches and uttering words which ought to enrage and depress the Poles, he had succeeded in spreading among them the conviction that he had not only the interest of Poland at heart, but a particular feeling of affection for the Poles. "To arouse enthusiasm, he has only to publish some newspaper article and send to Warsaw one of his Polish aides-de-camp to repeat his words in every drawing-room in the city. Whilst we suppose him devoid of all benevolent feeling, and only accessible to what might serve his ambitious views, he has persuaded the Poles that he loves them, and only sees in them his true friends." The Emperor said this was true, for he knew for certain that as soon as M. de Montavilet had made the speech alluded to, Napoleon had said quite the contrary to the Poles, and tried to destroy the bad effect it might produce by explanations and promises. He added, that Napoleon was a man who had no scruples as to the means he used provided he attained his end.

Czartoriski had heard a rumour in St. Petersburg that Napoleon was threatened with mental derangement and epileptic attacks, so he asked the Emperor if there was any truth in it. Alexander replied, "Napoleon will never become insane; it is quite impossible; and those who believe it do not know him at all. He is a man who, in the midst of the greatest agitations, has always a cool and calm head. All his fits of anger are only for other people, and are generally premeditated. He does nothing without having thought over it and combined it all. Those acts which appear most violent

and most audacious are coldly calculated. One of his favourite maxims is, that in everything you must first find the method : there is nothing so difficult that it may not be accomplished if the right mode of proceeding is found ; that found, the rest is nothing : but, on the other hand, you should not attempt the simplest thing in the world till you have caught the method of doing it, or else it is sure to fail. As to his health, they are only invented tales ; no one has better health. He is never ill, and his only inconvenience is a *humeur galeuse*,* which has returned, and for which he is treated. No one can better support fatigue and work, but he requires sleep without always restricting himself to regular hours, provided that altogether he can sleep eight hours a day. He is not eloquent, either in speaking or writing.† I have heard him dictate letters in an abrupt, disjointed style." The Emperor then spoke of the divorce, and of the affairs of Spain ; of the divorce, by remarking what a talent the French had for putting everything in the most agreeable light ; and of the Spanish campaign, as a great blunder on Napoleon's part, from which he would end by extricating himself.

Czartoriski inferred from this conversation that Alexander understood Napoleon's character better than any one, and feared him ; and that he preserved a kindly feeling towards himself, but without much desire to retain his services. "He always appears reserved and irritable," which, allowing for the peculiar circumstances that might embarrass him in talking to his former friend and confidant, he thinks had become the Emperor's natural state.

In the second week of March, 1810, having just returned from a visit to Pulawy and Warsaw, Czartoriski was summoned to speak to the Emperor again on the subject of a separate government for the eight Polish provinces annexed

* The itch.

† Count Beugnot, who often acted as his secretary, also stated this fact. Probably those of his attendants who were surprised at his rapidity in dictation, were not well-educated men themselves. Varnhagen von Ense, who was in Paris in 1810, declared that Napoleon's fits of temper were assumed, and that he was in the habit of falling upon the most insignificant person present in order to overawe the rest ; and, according to Las Cases, he said the same of himself in St. Helena, as he found that apparent violence carried more weight than self-control. Talleyrand said he could not dictate.

to Russia, and to inform him if he thought that Russia could depend on the inhabitants of these provinces. But such a project was entirely opposed to Czartoriski's own aspirations. It would, as he reflected, "raise altar against altar," and risk a civil war in Poland. He required some time to think over his answer, and three weeks afterwards returned again with a paper he had prepared, and which he read aloud. Alexander listened very attentively till the conclusion, where it was stated that the most propitious time for doing something in favour of Poland was already past, and then he interrupted him by saying, "You are thinking of the year 1805, and my visit to Pulawy. I see now that was a favourable moment, perhaps unique. I might then have done easily what now could only be done with great trouble. But it must not be forgotten that we should have had all the Prussian army against us." As the Emperor owned more than once to the mistake he then made, "I could not further dwell upon it," says Czartoriski. "I contented myself with saying that the other very favourable occasion was during the last war with Austria, when Russia might easily have exacted the re-establishment of Poland." "It would have provoked the total ruin of Austria," said the Emperor. "But certainly," said Czartoriski, "the course you followed was the worst, for it has not saved Austria, since she threw herself into the arms of France; it has vexed Napoleon, and brought no great advantage to Russia." When he had finished reading his paper, he excused himself for not having entirely answered the Emperor's question, since he was ignorant of the feelings predominating in the Polish provinces. It was only in these districts an opinion could be formed of the reception with which any proposal on the part of Russia would be met as a means of opposing the all-powerful influence of Napoleon. The Emperor said, rather impatiently, that without living in these districts "it was not difficult to know the Polish sentiments in the provinces and the Duchy. That might be said in very few words—the Poles would even follow the devil if the devil offered to re-establish their country."

With regard to the article in the late convention, "that the name of Poles and Poland shall never in future be applied to any of the districts or inhabitants who formerly composed

the kingdom of Poland, and that these names shall be effaced for ever from every public and official act," Alexander said it had been originally inserted by M. de Champagny, and he had erased it. The paper was now on its way to Paris for revision. (Napoleon afterwards made the Poles believe that Alexander wished to insert it, and that his refusal to do so was one of the causes of their quarrel.) The Emperor added, he was satisfied with Czartoriski's report; the subject had occupied him for some time. He had thought of every means of realizing his wishes, and had arrived at nothing satisfactory. The great difficulty was to indemnify the King of Saxony, as he could not again dismember that poor King of Prussia.

Czartoriski replied, the greatest difficulty was the consent of France; the rest would be easy. Alexander said, that as Napoleon cared less for Poland's good than to make use of her in case he wished to go to war with Russia, he was interested in not changing the present state of things, to have the means he had prepared in his hand. As to the feelings of the inhabitants of the Duchy of Warsaw, the Emperor owned it was clear that, considering the respective forces of the two Powers, the talent and the experience of the contending generals and armies, and the great chance of victory Napoleon would have in any war, the Poles would not throw themselves into the arms of Russia at the risk of losing the fruit of their long-sustained efforts. "I entirely coincided in this," said Czartoriski. "After detailing his own ideas on the subject, the Emperor suddenly asked me whether the desired end would not be accomplished if he did not oppose the formation of a kingdom of Poland composed of the Duchy and of Galicia, but even permitted the Russe-Poles to go and serve there as in their own country. As I appeared surprised, the Emperor added, the Poles, thus satisfied, would have no reason for turning against Russia, and might be tranquillized; France, having no longer this apple of discord between herself and Russia, would have no motive for declaring war: it was, in short, to proceed to amputation, and to rid himself of the evil instead of pretending to cure it." Czartoriski viewing the question as a Pole who required the addition of Lithuania, did not adopt this idea. He told the Emperor he thought the plan he had mentioned in his note was the only practicable

one, and he believed this year (1810) was an epoch which could not pass without producing graver and more decisive events than they had yet seen. "The Emperor interrupted me, and said in a piercing tone, he did not believe it would be this year, because Napoleon was occupied with his marriage, but he expected the crisis the next year. 'We are in the month of April,' he said; 'so it will be in nine months.' As he said these words, and generally throughout the conversation, the Emperor had a rigid and fixed gaze which recalled to me his haggard eyes at the time of Austerlitz. His countenance was full of depression and discouragement. I observed much uneasiness, and a great desire to arrange the affairs of Poland in some way or other, and to do on his side all that he could. At several turns of the conversation he made a sort of *amende honorable* to me, by saying, without being provoked to do so, that the year 1805 was the most favourable for the execution of the project. I left his Majesty very uncertain of what would happen."

CHAPTER III.

1810—1812.

PREPARATIONS FOR WAR BETWEEN FRANCE AND RUSSIA.

ÆTAT. 32—34.

THE new Council of State was opened January 1st, 1810. It was intended to fill up the space between the senate and the throne, and for ever prevent the paramount influence of favourites over the affairs of the empire, as it might have assumed considerable powers in the event of the accession of a female sovereign, or of a prince like Paul. But instead of being favourably received, the ministers thought it was an interference with their privileges, and the nobility imagined it was connected with the continental system, and an importation from foreign countries. Even Golovin, no favourable authority, asserts that the Russian Government was as good at that time as it could be for persons who did not know how to govern themselves; and "what," said an English politician at the Congress of Vienna, "would be the state of a Russian Parliament with the representatives of its seventy-two different nations all clamouring to be heard, and voting for opposite measures?" By Alexander's desire Speranski drew up the form of a constitution, resembling that of England, with an hereditary and elective chamber. But in the mean time the secretary's new financial measures did not relieve the embarrassment of the treasury, which issued a fresh amount of assignats. Czartoriski on behalf of the professors of Vilna wrote to complain to the Emperor that the Minister of Education had given notice that they must receive them for their salaries instead of silver. He knew they would not pass out of Russia if France or the Duchy of Warsaw extended her influence over Vilna; but the objection once raised, caused a general want of confidence, and although Speranski established a sinking fund, so that they might be

gradually drawn in, and a new tariff was imposed on foreign goods to meet it, such a step was beyond the understanding of the Russian merchant—who at that period always made use of the Chinese balls to assist him in casting up accounts—and only produced additional discontent. Since the peace of Tilsit the village priests exerted themselves strenuously to spread a strong hatred among the peasantry against the French, as being atheists and republicans; and the levity of the emigrants lent a powerful support to this charge. They even went so far as to attribute the scarcity throughout 1810-11, and the existence of the plague, to the alliance of Russia with an unbelieving empire.

In the last six months' struggle with Russia for the possession of Finland, the Swedes offered the crown to an English prince, and then appealed to Napoleon to help them; but he answered he was bound by treaties to the Czar. When the peace of Frederickshamm was signed in 1809, he advocated the cause of the King of Denmark as the future successor to Charles XIII., evidently wishing by the union of Scandinavia to create another barrier against his present ally; but it was a most unpopular suggestion in Sweden, though as she was anxious to elect a crown prince who would be agreeable to France, she offered the dignity to Bernadotte, a soldier risen from the ranks during the wars of the French republic, on condition that he would adopt the Lutheran faith. Napoleon expressed surprise at the nomination, and wrote to St. Petersburg that he had nothing to do with it, and would have preferred the King of Denmark; but he lent him a million francs to instal himself creditably in his new post.

At the beginning of 1810 Alexander formally annexed all the Turkish provinces north of the Danube, the Russian army having occupied them for three years; and when the Swedish war was ended, he increased his forces considerably in those provinces to compel the Turks to sign a peace. During that winter, while the Russians commanded batteries along the north shore of the Danube, the Austrians and Turks carried on an active trade in English goods, which, kept out from the north of Germany by the continental blockade, were introduced as largely as before, though through the south. They were not permitted to enter Russia, but the generals did not choose to act

as gendarmes for France, and allowed the traffic to go on undisturbed, as regarded Austria and Servia. The increase of the army on the Danube gave Napoleon some uneasiness, as he chose to think it was preparing against him; he directed Caulaincourt to make inquiries on the subject, and the French envoy at Constantinople received orders to use every exertion by threats and bribes to induce the Turks to refuse to conclude a peace. A fatality seemed to attend the Russian generals: one after another, including the younger Kamenski, fell ill and died, and Suvorov, the only son of the great commander, was drowned while bathing in the River Rymnik. Kutuzov had remained in retirement since Austerlitz, but was at length appointed general-in-chief. All the old barbaric modes of warfare were still carried on by the Turks, who never gave quarter, and cut off the heads of their killed and wounded enemies after a battle; but both armies maintained their pledged word most honourably, to an extent which Napoleon and the civilized French troops never practised in other parts of Europe. Kutuzov gained the battle of Rustchuk, July 3rd, with 18,000 Russians against 60,000 Turks led by the Grand Vizier; and October 2nd, General Markof captured the Imperial camp, where he took twenty-two standards, eight cannon, and the bâton of the Aga of the Janisaries. The Grand Vizier escaped, leaving his army completely surrounded, but Kutuzov expressed pleasure on hearing of it, because he said no one but the Grand Vizier would dare to tell the Sultan the desperate condition of his army. Finding they were absolutely starving, he kept them supplied with biscuit, as, if they all died, the Sultan would not have the same reason for making peace. Even in October, 1811, the open representations of France and Austria prevented the Sultan from concluding peace with their ostensible ally, whom France was bound by treaty to assist in obtaining not only the provinces demanded, but also Bulgaria from Turkey. The negotiation went on through the winter in Wallachia, when the Russians having destroyed the Turkish fortresses along the Danube, agreed to the peace of Bucharest (May 28th, 1812), by which, owing to the pressure put upon her through the invasion of the whole Continent, she relinquished the principalities, but obtained the

province of Bessarabia, commanding the mouth of the Danube, and also four fortresses on the coast of Circassia. Those Moldavians and Wallachians who dreaded the return of the Turkish supremacy were offered lands in the ceded province of Bessarabia and round Odessa, and many followed the Russian army when it abandoned Bucharest, where the grateful inhabitants presented the Russian General Miloradovitz with a gold-hilted sword set with jewels, for having saved the city from assault by the Turks in 1806.

As soon as Napoleon became the husband of an Austrian arch-duchess her family completely embraced his policy, and supported by her alliance he began to act as if France was now the only power left in Europe. In July, 1810, Louis* resigned the crown of Holland, and Napoleon immediately incorporated the Dutch territories in his empire. On November 12th the republic of the Valais was annexed, as it commanded the passage of the Simplon into Italy; and this was followed by the seizure of the provinces on the north coast of Germany, cutting off 500,000 subjects from the King of Westphalia, 200,000 from the territory of the Grand Duke of Berg, all the dominions of the Duke of Oldenburg, whose estates had been guaranteed by France at the treaty of Tilsit, and entirely separating Prussia from the sea-coast, bringing the French empire up to Lubeck. The decree announcing this annexation gave as a reason that the British Orders in Council and the Berlin Decree had destroyed the public law of Europe, that a new order of things reigned throughout the world, and that a plan was prepared to unite the Baltic with the Seine in five years, that the dispossessed princes should receive indemnities, and "as to the Grand Duke of Oldenburg," Napoleon wrote, "I shall leave him his private property till a treaty is concluded, but his public territories must be instantly taken from him . . . I will give the Grand Duke Erfurt."

There was but one independent sovereign on the Continent to lift up his voice against this act, and he did not remain

* Louis had made himself popular with his new subjects, and the angry letters which Napoleon addressed to him to induce him to act more despotically show that he was more fitted than his brother to govern a free people.

silent. Alexander rejected ~~all~~ the plausible grounds put forward by France on the score of public utility, and said that Napoleon was entirely selfish, and had in reality no other policy : he cared neither for the true interests of France nor for those of Europe. "We must be prepared for everything," he said, "and protest against it. Had the Emperor Napoleon, instead of this violent act, come to my frontiers, he would have found me as much estranged from England as I was three years ago. He would have seen decisive proof that the devotion of Russia to the cause of the Continent is the result of a desire for peace, and not a sense of weakness." His intimacy with the French ambassador ceased, and they met only to deliver the notes exchanged between the two governments. Alexander could not affect to be blind to the gathering of French armies and artillery in North Germany, contrary to his treaties with Napoleon, nor to the reinforcement of the garrison of Dantzic, now containing 20,000 men, the troops collecting in the Duchy of Warsaw, and the defensive works being erected at Modlin, Thorn, Warsaw, and Torgau. "If affairs change," he said to Caulaincourt, "I have not contributed to it. I shall not be the first to disturb the peace of Europe. I shall attack no one, but if they come to seek me I shall defend myself."

The real motive for this act, as Alexander supposed, was either to pick a quarrel with Russia, or from the lowest mercenary motives ; for Napoleon had, during some years, hoarded up large sums of money in the Tuileries, the profits of the sale of licences to traders to import English goods, while publicly he protested that not a shilling's worth of English manufactured or colonial produce should be sold in the continental markets. "He lavished licences," says Bourrienne, his agent at Hamburg, and by possessing himself of the whole coast, he could effectually keep out all other smugglers, and therefore reap more profits himself by the same trade. On the 5th of August, 1810, he permitted the importation of English goods through Holstein by the payment of fifty per cent. on their value ; but on the 18th of October he decreed that all English produce found in France, or in countries connected with her, should be burned. Hitherto Russia had adhered most rigidly to the continental

system, to the total impoverishment of Livonia, so that during 1810-11, Alexander allowed the postponement of the payment of all taxes and other debts to the crown in that province; but he signed a ukaz, December 25th, 1810, admitting English merchandize into Russia under neutral flags. It was in reality admitted through Napoleon's connivance to all other parts of Europe. France was bound by treaty to adhere to the continental system equally with the other States, but there was not a single article of the treaty of Tilsit she had not violated whenever it appeared to be her interest to do so. Alexander only without disguise let his people avail themselves of produce which all other Europeans were enjoying by underhand methods with the French Government's consent, though forced to conceal it lest it should be destroyed. At the same time the tariff already mentioned was announced which raised the duties on merchandize from France.

Before the decree for annexing the northern provinces of Germany, Napoleon levied an extra conscription of 160,000 men; but notwithstanding this measure, intended to intimidate Russia, Alexander addressed a note to all the European Courts, protesting against the seizure of the Duke of Oldenburg's dominions and the portion of Prussian territory. He increased his coastguard service, to prevent any sudden descent on his unprotected seaports; for the French armies were gradually creeping nearer to his frontiers, and it was very evident that it was only fear of consequences which could keep them at all in check, as was exhibited in their conduct to the weaker States; the seizure of Pomerania and of a number of Swedish vessels in the harbour of Stralsund,* January, 1812, when Sweden and France were at peace. Napoleon was highly indignant at Alexander's ukaz. He said to his ministers, "I shall not go to war on account of the ukaz and the tariff, but I shall stand on the defensive against the bad disposition which dictated it. I said myself to Czernichef (the Russian Secretary of Legation), that since I was made acquainted with that act I have raised a conscription: that act cost me a hundred millions (4,000,000*l.*) this year." He wrote to Alexander: "The last ukaz of your

* Pomerania had been restored to Sweden at the peace of Frederickshamm.

Majesty is specially directed against France—all Europe views it in that light. Already our alliance in the opinion of the Continent and England no longer exists. Consider what benefit your Majesty has derived from it. You have annexed Wallachia and Moldavia, a third of Turkey, to your dominions ; you have gained Finland, by which Sweden ceases to exist, for Stockholm is at the outposts of that kingdom. As a return to me, your Majesty excludes my commerce from the Gulf of Bothnia to the Danube." "Wallachia and Moldavia," he wrote again, February 28th, 1811, "is an acquisition which takes away the whole strength of Turkey, and I might say, annihilates that empire, my oldest ally. From pure friendship for your Majesty I have recognized the annexation of these beautiful countries but without my confidence in the continuation of your friendship several very unfortunate campaigns could not have brought France to see her oldest ally so despoiled . . . I have consented that your Majesty should keep Finland, which is a third of Sweden, yet Sweden was also one of the oldest friends of France." He represented that he had done all this without any return except Alexander's friendship, or promise of friendship ; that Alexander was beset by calumnious information as to his intentions, for if he had wished to re-establish Poland, he might have been at Vilna* twelve days after the battle of Friedland, or might have done it in 1810, when the Russian troops were engaged against Turkey. He might do it now. At a public levée at the Tuileries he addressed Prince Kurakin in a loud and insolent tone : "Be it good fortune, the bravery of my troops, or because I understand the business, I have always been successful in war. I do not say I shall beat you, but we shall fight. You know I have money. I have 800,000 men, and every year places 250,000 conscripts at my disposal. In three years I can augment my army by 700,000 men, which will enable me to carry on the war in Spain and against you at the same time. If you reckon upon Austria, you are deceived, for if she is able to fight it will only be to reclaim the territory she lately ceded to you ;" and he used the same threatening language in reply to an address from the French Council of Commerce on the birth of his son. He wrote to

* He said the contrary at St. Helena.

Alexander, telling him that "if Russia makes peace with England, it will be the certain sign of war with France."

"Napoleon," says Caulaincourt, "would only see in my constant efforts since 1810 to prevent a rupture with his most faithful and sure ally, a blind predilection on my part for the Emperor of Russia. In my correspondence, and later in our conversation, I pointed out to him the high political considerations which made the alliance of Russia the firm support of France. I owe to a noble confidence communications of such a nature that there was no possibility of deluding oneself further on the storm forming around us . . . but he cut me short by an ironical word: 'Mr. Russian, the Emperor Alexander is an enchanter who has dazzled your brains.' When in 1811 I asked my recall, it was with the hope of diverting the storm ready to break out. The Emperor of Russia said to me in our last conversation, 'Tell the Emperor Napoleon that I shall not separate myself from him unless he forces me to it.' Yet Napoleon would not believe this confidential message made to be communicated to him. Could he not comprehend this generosity?"

Napoleon's jealousy of the Czar was very evident to his attendants soon after the meeting at Erfurt, and even before the Austrian war. During a visit he paid to Amsterdam he saw a bust of Alexander, a remarkably good likeness, in one of the public buildings. He threw it over as if by accident; and when it was picked up he angrily exclaimed, "Take it anywhere, only never let me see it again." In 1811 he said at a levée, "I am considered, I know, to be of no family; but whatever my family may be, my dynasty will soon be the oldest in Europe."

De Maistre writes from St. Petersburg, May 19th, 1811, "Caulaincourt has left. . . . He spent here 1,200,000 francs. He said to a lady, on receiving a certain despatch, 'There are moments when an honest man wishes to be dead.'"

Caulaincourt was much impressed by Alexander's delicacy in never making any comment on the French disasters in Spain. At a time when all St. Petersburg was ringing with them, and Napoleon had showed no scruple in referring to Friedland and Austerlitz, and the checks which the Russians had experienced in Finland and Bulgaria, he abstained from any

recrimination in his correspondence with France, and only once alluded to them with the ambassador in a good-natured manner, and as if they were temporary difficulties, when Caulaincourt had introduced the subject, and he could not ignore it.

The new spoliation of Prussia came at a time when the whole nation was mourning for the recent death of their unhappy queen, who died worn out by anxiety and disappointment, July 19th, 1810, after two or three weeks' illness. Her patriotic spirit removed from the scene of action had an unfortunate effect for Russia in the approaching campaign. Her country was again occupied by large French armies, which it was called upon to feed, pay, clothe, and lodge at the national expense. Under this heavy pressure, and without his wife's enthusiasm to support him, Frederick William could not make up his mind to throw off his fetters and declare for Russia, but yielded to the influence of the French party among his ministers and formed another defensive and offensive alliance with France. Napoleon knew well the man with whom he had to deal, and that he could safely leave Prussia in his rear while he invaded Russia; particularly when she had been further exhausted by providing the supplies necessary for the support of 600,000 men on their march.

The following letter is in reply to Czartoriski's complaint of a project for removing the Polish school of Krzemeniec and of a commission sent by the new Minister of Education to report upon it. Czartoriski said it showed want of confidence in himself, and made it the ground for tendering his resignation of the office of Curator of the University of Vilna, which in reality he desired to vacate in view of the impending struggle between Russia and France. In his answer Alexander details his own means of defence in case of a war:—

"Petersburg, December 25th, 1810.

"I received your letter of the 15th (27th) of November, my dear friend, and it has given me much pain. You wish to break the only public tie existing between us, and after a friendship of more than fifteen years, that no circumstance has destroyed, we shall become strangers, if not in our feelings, at least in our public relations. . . . But I will first

finish about this unfortunate affair of the school. Your countrymen are the sole cause of it, by alleging that the situation of Krzemeniec was ill chosen, from its proximity to the Austrian frontier giving the students great facilities for breaking loose and committing other pranks. Among them are even the marshals of the nobility, and all have asked for an investigation. At their repeated request the commission was nominated. I am far from wishing to make any change in the organization of the school, and I intended when I received the report of the commission to do nothing without consulting you. You see this affair is not worth the distress it gives you, or your decision, which is so unpropitious at the present moment.

"Here is a subject on which I have touched before. The current events are most important. It is the moment to prove to the Poles that Russia is not their enemy, but their true and natural friend; that although she is pointed out to them as the only existing opponent to the restoration of Poland, it may be she, on the contrary, who realizes it; and the time seems favourable for carrying out an idea formerly my favourite idea. Circumstances have twice made it my duty to adjourn it, but it has not the less remained in my thoughts. But before going further, you must answer me these questions, point by point, with the most minute detail:—

"1st. Have you tolerably accurate information on the disposition of the inhabitants of the Duchy of Warsaw? and in that case,

"2nd. Have you good reason to believe that the Varsovians would eagerly seize any certainty (not probability, but certainty) of their restoration?

"3rd. Would they seize it from whatever point it came to them, and unhesitatingly join the Power which should sincerely embrace their interests? Of course the proclamation of their restoration would precede their union, and would prove the sincerity of the conduct that they would adopt in respect to that Power.

"Or, 4th. Have you reason, instead, to suppose that there exist different parties, and that after that (the proclamation),

"5th. We could not count on a unanimous resolution to seize with eagerness the first occasion offered to them for the regeneration of Poland?

“6th. What are these parties? Are they of equal weight? And who are regarded as their leaders?”

“7th. Do these parties also exist in the army; or is it more united in opinion and feeling?”

“8th. Who is the individual with most influence among the military?”

“These are the most important questions I can ask now. As soon as I receive the answers I will explain more to you.

“If you think this letter is written with the intention of influencing the public mind, and being covertly circulated, you will spoil the end I have in view; and the most impenetrable secrecy should be observed as to its contents. I think I know your feeling for me enough to depend on your confidence and prudence. The object must also interest you too much not to insure your care in a work to which your country may owe its regeneration, Europe its deliverance, and you, personally, the glory of having co-operated in it, and of showing that your conduct was consistent, and that those of your own people who formerly counted on you were not deceived. If you second me, and your notions are such as to make me hope for a unity of purpose on the part of the Varsovians, above all of the army, for their restoration, no matter whence it comes, in that case success is not doubtful with the help of God; for it is based, not on a hope of counterbalancing the talents of Napoleon, but only on the failure of his means joined to the general exasperation throughout Germany against him. I add a sketch of the auxiliary forces which will be at the disposal of both sides. This is what I have to say to you. Think calmly over its importance. Such a moment may only once present itself. Every other combination will lead to an interminable war to the death between Russia and France, and the unhappy theatre of it will be your country. And as the support on which the Poles count is only dependent on Napoleon personally, and he is not immortal, if his individual aid failed them, the consequences must be disastrous for Poland, while her existence would be formed in a solid manner, when conjointly with Russia and the Powers who would unite themselves to her, the moral power of France is overturned, and Europe delivered from her yoke. At this moment I only ask from you—

"1st. A detailed and prompt answer to the contents of my letter.

"2nd. If you think my ideas merit attention, perhaps you could *enter into conversation* with those important persons with whom you have been intimate, and who are attached to the country, *above* all foreign co-operation.

"3rd. To take great care *only to do it* with those whose co-operation is *absolutely necessary*.

"For this you may honestly say that you have received from Russia an unlimited leave to travel and take care of your health. (Czartoriski had given health as one motive for wishing to leave Vilna.) As to your journey, you should make it in the fine season. For the necessary preparations you may go to Warsaw. There you can judge best what effect your influence might produce on public opinion. This is more important than the school and your resignation. It is the moment when you can really serve your country for the first time.

"I await your answer with the greatest impatience. To excite no suspicion, you can send it by a special courier to Brzesc, addressing it to the Governor of Grodno, Lanskoï, who will take care of all which comes to me from you, or by any other way you may judge the surest.

"Ever yours in heart and soul,

"ALEXANDER.

"Note of the forces which will be opposed to each other. On one side—100,000 Russians, 50,000 Poles, 50,000 Prussians, 30,000 Danes. Total, 230,000 men, who can be quickly reinforced by another 100,000 Russians. On the other side—60,000 Frenchmen (there are said to be only 46,000 men in Germany; but I add what may be drawn from Holland and the interior of France), 30,000 Saxons, 30,000 Bavarians, 20,000 Würtemberghers, 15,000 Westphalians and other German troops. Total, 155,000 men. Most probably the Polish example will be followed by the Germans, and then there will only remain the 60,000 Frenchmen. And if Austria, weighing the advantages that we should offer to her, enters the lists against France, there will be 200,000 men the more to act against Napoleon."

In this very sanguine review of his own powers of resistance, Alexander counted on the Swedes and Italians remaining neutral, on the continuance of the Spanish insurrection, and that a considerable force must be left to guard France. He also reckoned upon the proportion of recruits with regard to the population drawn from France and the dependent countries as no more than the utmost ever drawn from Russia, where slighter defects exclude a man from the conscription than was the case in France. He did not contemplate that the population of France would be materially affected for years by her immense exertions in the gigantic struggle. Even Napoleon's utter indifference to the sufferings of his adopted country could hardly, he supposed, be carried to such a length; and, as he had since discovered the French were eager for peace at Tilsit, he thought it would now be secured at a less enormous cost than was afterwards proved. But at any rate it is obvious that the Poles threw away their only chance of the resuscitation of their ancient kingdom with the goodwill of the Russian people, which they would perhaps have earned for ever if they had stood side by side with the only sovereign in Europe who could undertake to restore the Continent to independence, instead of turning to the oppressor. But a universal depression weighed over Germany, and even extended to Great Britain, where the Liberal politicians declared their idol Napoleon to be invincible, and his steadiest opponents only looked to his death for a termination of the war, and seemed to think no human agency could now disturb his throne in France. Alexander was almost the only statesman at that time who, admitting Napoleon's genius, still believed his power to be assailable, and who, through the long struggle, carefully noted the causes of failure, and in his own army strove to remedy them and put it on a par with that of his enemy. In his familiar intercourse with Napoleon he had seen his ally's weakness as well as his strength; and how far France was straying from the republican simplicity which trained her heroes and acquired her present position in Europe. That simplicity and Spartan poverty gained his early admiration as so different from the Court where he was brought up; and the luxury and Imperial pomp which Napoleon delighted to parade before him only brought down the head of the



French Government in his eyes to the level of other monarchs.

Czartoriski's answer to Alexander's letter showed plainly that Napoleon had succeeded in completely deluding the Poles. There was, he said, perfect unanimity in Warsaw for one end, and that was the restoration of their country. Napoleon had convinced them that it was the absolute impossibility of restoring their country, not the want of good faith, that had prevented it, and that on the first quarrel with Russia, Poland should live once more. He had said that his public and diplomatic assurances to Russia had been made only to conceal his game. The most thoughtful and honest among them would refuse to turn against him at the very moment when he was especially counting on their support. The idea that the French were their friends and the Russians their deadly enemies was too deeply rooted to be disturbed. Added to this, 20,000 of the Polish troops were in Spain, and by joining Russia their friends would sacrifice them to Napoleon's vengeance. The children of the first families of the Duchy of Warsaw were also at school in France, and so many hostages for their parents' loyalty. But the last and strongest difficulty lay in the popular notion of the superior talents of Napoleon. Hitherto he had found means to draw himself successfully out of every difficulty in which he was placed. Everybody was convinced that it would always be the same, and that under any circumstances he would come out triumphant. What if Austria did not declare herself for the Allies, after the custom of the great Powers, who had successively abandoned each other?—that would much diminish the chances of success.

"The wishes of the Poles," continued Czartoriski, "would be satisfied if the constitution of 1791* was conferred upon them, and all Poland united under the same crown, so as to end the cruel state of things in which relations were the subjects of different sovereigns, and in some cases the estates of one landed proprietor were in three different countries. They must also have commercial outlets to enable their nation to rise from its present state of poverty and weakness. He thought the decision of Poland would turn the scale in favour

* The Czartoriski family had been some of the principal promoters of this.

of either of the belligerents; but he proceeded to ask if Caulaincourt had not perceived the military preparations, and might not Napoleon desire to cause a war as a pretext for drawing his troops from Spain and attracting them by the hope of an easier success? Had his Majesty trustworthy information as to the number of French troops in Germany not being more than he stated? If it came only from the Cabinet of Berlin, the Emperor knew by sad experience the Prussians were not always very exact, and the French had the art of concealing their real strength. What was become of the new levy of French conscripts? Could he also really depend on 100,000 Russians, for Czartoriski had often seen that number inscribed on paper when everybody said there were not more than 60,000 effective men. His Majesty would have to deal with a man who was never deceived with impunity. He even doubted whether Alexander's own resolutions as regarded Poland, if she did devote herself to him, could be depended upon. Russia seemed at that moment at the lowest ebb of her fortunes since the death of Catherine; and Czartoriski's letters to Alexander less than two years afterwards were worded in a very different tone. It is natural that a public man should become unpopular after a series of misfortunes, and that friends should again cluster around him when he meets with success. The writer ended by saying he would obey his Majesty's wishes and go to Warsaw. He knew the importance of caution, but at the same time it would rather close his mouth. In a postscript he says it was rumoured in Warsaw that there will be war, and that Russia is preparing for it.

Alexander answered this letter January 31st, 1811. He said the difficulties Czartoriski described were great, but he had partly foreseen them, and the results were too considerable for them to stop him halfway. He answered Czartoriski's questions one by one and in detail. By a restoration of Poland he meant the union of all that had been Poland, with the exception of White Russia,* so as to take the Dwina, the Beresina, and the Dnieper for frontiers. The government officials, as well as the army, should be native Poles. He

* This originally belonged to Russia; was conquered by Poland, and restored to Russia in 1649.

asked Czartoriski to send him a copy of the constitution of 1791, as he did not recollect it entirely, and could not decide upon it without having seen it. To convince the Poles of the sincerity of his offers, the proclamations for the re-establishment of Poland should precede any public movement on their part. "But the conditions *sine quâ non* under which I offer these results are, that the kingdom of Poland should be for ever united to Russia, the Emperor taking the title of Emperor of Russia and King of Poland; and a formal and positive assurance of the unanimous disposition and feeling of the inhabitants of the duchy to produce this result, which must be guaranteed by the signatures of the most distinguished persons. Now I shall try and lessen your fears as to the insufficiency of our military means." He then goes over the different divisions and the number of men contained in each who would be ready at once to act with the Poles, by which, including Cossacks, he makes up the number to 106,500 men. A second army, of which he gives the particulars, including irregulars, would amount to 134,000, and a third army was forming of recruits who had been exercised for several months at the dépôts. "The corps of Moldavia might detach a few divisions and still remain on the defensive, and the armies in Finland, Georgia, and the Crimea would remain entirely intact."

"Two difficulties at first present themselves," continued the Emperor. "The reunion of Galicia on account of Austria. There is every reason for dealing gently with her and avoiding any irritation. With that view I have decided to offer her Wallachia and Moldavia to the Sereth as an exchange for Galicia. But it would be necessary to defer the reunion of Galicia till we obtain her consent, to show that we have no other unfavourable views towards her. Consequently the kingdom of Poland will at first be formed of the Duchy of Warsaw and the Russian provinces. The compensation to be offered to the King of Saxony is a second difficulty, which gives me more trouble. But I shall only think myself bound to make it if he joins my side."

"Napoleon is undoubtedly trying to provoke Russia to war, hoping that I shall make the mistake of being the aggressor. It would certainly be one in present circumstances, and I am determined not to make it. But everything changes if the Poles join me. Reinforced by the 50,000 men I should owe to

them, by the 50,000 Prussians who might, without risk, also join me, and by the moral revolution which would be the unfailing result in Europe, I might advance to the Oder without striking a blow. I agree with you in thinking a proposal of peace should be made here. Even if it is not accepted, and if war must take place, let us consider attentively and impartially the two cases, and the advantages which may result from them to the Poles.

“ In the first case, supposing the Poles attached to France and co-operating with her—Russia being resolved not to attack—Napoleon may not wish to begin, at least while Spain occupies him, and a great mass of his means are there. Then things may continue on the same footing as they are now, and the regeneration of Poland would be adjourned to a distant and very uncertain period. If Napoleon, on the contrary, attacks Russia, and at the same time proclaims the restoration of Poland, this would only include the Duchy of Warsaw, for he would have to seize the Russian provinces by force. In the mean while the Duchy of Warsaw and the Polish provinces would become the theatre of war and of all imaginable devastations ; so they may be sure that after such a war, whatever was the end of it, Poland would only be a vast desert and the inhabitants the most unfortunate victims of its consequences. Such is the probable result of Poland proclaimed by France.*

“ The second case, in which I suppose the Poles united to Russia and co-operating with her : the unfailing results are these:—1. The restoration of Poland, instead of being adjourned, will precede every other event. 2. This restoration will comprehend the Duchy of Warsaw reunited with the Russian provinces (Lithuania, &c.), and a tolerably positive hope that Galicia will be joined to it in the same way. 3. The theatre of the war, instead of being in the heart of Poland, will be removed to the Oder. Such are the *certain* results ; whilst the probable results may be:—1. A complete revolution in the opinion of Europe. 2. A very marked decrease in Napoleon’s forces, and consequently a chance of success ; for Napoleon will have much trouble to withdraw his forces from Spain, where he is opposed to an enraged nation counting more

* Only a year and three-quarters elapsed when the truth of this prediction was fulfilled.

than 300,000 combatants, and who would not content herself with his retreat, but would penetrate into France, profiting by the new war that Napoleon will have on hand. 3. The deliverance of the yoke under which the Continent languishes. 4. Poland will become a kingdom annexed to a strong empire, whose forces, for her own interest, will always be ready to defend her. 5. Commerce re-established, misery extinct, a liberal constitution, taxes in proportion to the need of the country, and not as now extorted only to support a much too numerous military, and to serve the ambitious plans of Napoleon. Lastly, even the fear you feel for the 20,000 men in the service of Napoleon appears unfounded, for what could happen to them beyond being for some time prisoners of war? To all these reasons may we not add, that the French success, attaching only to the person of Napoleon, if he failed the interest France takes in Poland would fall with him; whilst on the other hand the wars with Russia resulting from the restoration of Poland by France would be interminable, and after Napoleon's death would begin again with new vigour. What a source of evils for posterity! Such is the programme. This is the result:—1. Till I can be sure of the co-operation of the Poles I have decided not to begin the war with France. 2. If this co-operation of the Poles with Russia is to take place, I must receive assurances and *indubitable* proofs, before I can act in the manner sketched out. You feared that Caulaincourt might have perceived this design. It is impossible, for even the Chancellor is ignorant of our correspondence. The question has been more than once discussed with the last, but I do not wish anybody to know that I am already occupying myself with these measures. As to the military preparations, they are of a defensive nature, and not at all concealed. France herself gives me every motive by the successive reinforcement of her northern army. I have spoken of it openly to Caulaincourt, and Czernichef has carried a letter to Paris in which I have spoken even to the Emperor. I am obliged to take precautionary measures, but am fully decided to remain in my system, and certainly not to be the aggressor. But I must own the opinion that it will be necessary for me to take the title of the King of Poland becomes more general in St. Petersburg. If on one side it shows that this measure will be re-

ceived with applause, on the other, at the present moment, these conversations are rather hurtful than useful, and I try as much as possible to suppress them. I ought also to warn you that I know on good authority you are watched by the Minister of Police in Paris, so redouble your vigilance and prudence, even on your own premises. The nomination of Bignon instead of Serra is another embarrassment—they call him very stirring.”

Alexander enclosed two blank signatures, to enable any messenger whom Czartoriski might send with his answer to cross the frontier; and adds that he shall wait for it impatiently. But if the French interest in Poland was not likely to extend longer than the life of Napoleon, Czartoriski felt still more strongly that the good disposition of Russia towards Poland might last no further than the life of Alexander. He had reason for thinking this was a precarious tenure, and he owed to him that the idea of Constantine as their future Emperor was a continual source of alarm and uneasiness to the Poles. His answer gave Alexander no hope of his proposals being made in any way acceptable to the Poles. They confidently believed that Napoleon's first step in the impending war with Russia would be to proclaim their independence. Czartoriski told Alexander that their favourite leader, and the man who had most weight in Poland, was Poniatowski, one of the French marshals who had grown grey in the wars, first of the French Republic and then of the Empire. The Poles had so long shared in her campaigns that they felt their own honour and fortunes involved in her success. Was it likely that Russia, still at war with England, Turkey, and Persia, the two last having sworn they would not make peace till they had obtained Georgia and the Crimea, could keep her ground when opposed to all the rest of Europe? They only followed the current opinion when self-interest induced them in the coming campaign to cast in their lot with France.

While Sebastiani exerted himself to prevent a peace between Russia and Turkey, the English minister in Teheran had instructions to keep up the war between Russia and Persia, and at his instigation the Shah made an inroad into the Caucasus in 1811. Alexander counted on no assistance from England in case of a war with France. He still felt much soreness with

regard to her policy in 1807; he hardly even wished for her aid; but he expected that she would remain neutral, and he did count in some measure on the co-operation of Prussia. It was with no small surprise that he heard that as early as March, 1811, Frederick William offered himself* to Napoleon as an auxiliary in the expedition he was preparing against Russia. He renewed this offer in May, and again in the month of August, while his country was groaning under the oppression of the French armies, and Prussian patriots of noble birth were working at the galleys at Marseilles or the other convict prisons of France. Even those in Germany most anxious to throw off the French supremacy cheered on the French expedition to Russia, because they thought it would swallow up Napoleon's resources, and at least relieve them of the presence of his troops. Others foresaw the downfall of the Russian empire, and recommended the alliance with France as the only means of preserving Prussia and the smaller German States.

Napoleon did not conceal from himself the magnitude of his design, and fully counted on the active alliance of Sweden and Turkey. He caused Russian bank-notes to be forged in Paris at the end of 1811,† to supply pecuniary means for the campaign, and these were afterwards distributed in Lithuania with the information that they had been found in some Russian military chests at Vilna. He said at St. Helena that it was always more difficult to lead his army against the Russians than any other people, and the ministers and generals most in his confidence entreated him to think seriously before he broke the peace with the Czar. Savary had no longer a hope of peace when he saw Alexander's letter refusing Erfurt as a compensation to the Duke of Oldenburg, "and haughtily arrogating to himself the disposal or protection of his relations' territories." But the reasons Napoleon gave in private for wishing to attack Russia showed that he required no pretext, but was determined to destroy her power, which he thought seriously menaced the future of his own empire. "Can you not see," he said, "that as I was not born upon a throne I

* This was said to have been done in the hope of averting another French occupation, and at Napoleon's instigation.

† Ségur and Lamartine. Also Marshal St. Cyr.

must support myself on it as I ascended it, by my renown? It is necessary for that to go on increasing. A private individual become a sovereign, like myself, can no longer stop—he must be continually ascending; to remain stationary is his ruin.”* Ségur states that “one great uneasiness possessed him, the idea of that same death which he appeared so much to brave.” He felt that with him the French influence would probably cease over Italy and central Europe. “The Russian Emperor,” he said, “was the only sovereign who pressed upon the summit of his empire. Replete with youth and animation, the strength of his rival was constantly augmenting, while his was already on the decline.” He thought that Alexander only waited for his death to possess himself of the sceptre of Europe.

Even Poniatowski, though allured by the possible throne of Poland, is said to have advised Napoleon against placing any hopes in the co-operation of Lithuania, already half Russianized; and Duroc, the elder Count de Ségur, and Caulaincourt, who all knew Russia, joined their arguments to oppose the war. The military, aware of the unsatisfactory manner in which the last Russian campaign had ended, when they were promised the plunder of St. Petersburg, were incited by the hope that

* Ségur. The assertion of this author that Napoleon's health was beginning seriously to fail at this period is most directly contradicted by his secretary, General Gourgaud, and others who were in a much better position to know the truth. He was growing very stout, as is often the case with men who have lived a hard, abstemious life in youth, and find themselves in circumstances which admit of unlimited luxury as they advance to middle life; and extreme stoutness always brings with it a certain increase of bodily indolence. His usual propensity to sleep augmented to an inconvenient extent, and to counteract it he took frequent cups of green tea and brandy throughout the day, in addition to the enormous amount of snuff he constantly took, which is said to have disordered him occasionally. In 1816 he told Las Cases that he had never had a headache or *mal d'estomac* in his life, and only a fortnight before his death he said to Dr. Antommarchi that he should wish a post-mortem examination, as he believed he was suffering from the complaint of which his father died, though “till *very recently* he had never in all his life experienced any uneasiness in his stomach.” Ségur wrote his narrative nearly twelve years after the campaign, and after Napoleon's death, and wishes to prove that their enemies had no share in their disasters, which were to be attributed to incalculable events. He is remarkable for the inaccuracy of his dates and details, among other mistakes placing Napoleon's offer to engage not to restore Poland in March, 1812, instead of 1811, and stating that Nesselrode was never sent to Paris, when he had acted as an attaché in that capital for two years. Ségur survived into the Second Empire, but never received the slightest notice from Napoleon III.

Russia would be made a passage to India or Constantinople; but those who had really visited the country and were acquainted with her history and the bravery and obstinacy of her people, were convinced that no Frenchman, were he Napoleon himself, would ever be accepted as a Muscovite Czar. They would find in Russia another Spain, without her means for their subsistence, and instead of her lovely climate a brief summer succeeded by a murderous frost such as they had felt during the campaign on the Vistula, when, after the battle of Eylau, numbers of the wounded perished from cold. Caulaincourt was never awed into silence, and interrupted Napoleon several times in representing his case against Russia, saying, "It was absurd for Napoleon, after possessing himself of the Continent, and even of the States belonging to the family of his ally, to accuse that ally of abandoning the continental system. While the French armies covered all Europe how could the Russians be reproached for increasing their army? Did it become the ambition of Napoleon to denounce the ambition of Alexander? In addition to this, Alexander's mind was made up—Russia once invaded, no peace could be expected while a single Frenchman remained there: in this respect the national and obstinate pride of the Russians was in perfect harmony with that of their Emperor. It was true, Alexander's subjects accused him of weakness, but very erroneously. He was not to be judged by his concessions at Tilsit, which were actuated by his admiration of Napoleon, his inexperience, and perhaps a tincture of ambition. This prince loved justice, and was anxious to have right on his side, and he might indeed hesitate till he thought it was, but then he became inflexible; and looking to his position as regarded his subjects, he incurred more danger by making a disgraceful peace than by sustaining an unfortunate war." To all these objectors Napoleon promised that when this campaign was ended France should have peace; but he could only secure a lasting peace through the subjection of Russia.

At a levée at the Tuileries, August 3rd, 1811, Napoleon again attacked Prince Kurakin on the subject of his master's policy. The ambassador answered that Alexander was most peacefully disposed. "No," exclaimed Napoleon; "your master desires war. He loves me no longer. You are not in

the secret. The Russian army is hurrying towards the Niemen. The Emperor Alexander deludes and gains over all my envoys." Then perceiving Caulaincourt, he said, "Yes, and you too have become a Russian; you have been seduced by the Emperor Alexander." The Duke replied, "Yes, sire, because in this question I consider him to be a Frenchman." Napoleon did not answer, but for some time treated Caulaincourt with great coolness. He announced the war might last three years, and from the beginning of 1811 placed every military department in the utmost state of activity; on December 31st ordering another conscription of 120,000 men.

In 1810 General Barclay de Tolly replaced Aratchaief as Minister of War; Prince Kurakin, the brother of the ambassador, was Minister of the Interior; Prince Alexander Galitzin, of Education and Public Worship; Prince Lapoukhine, of Laws; Gourief, of Finance; Speranski, Secretary of the Empire, and Romanzov kept his post as Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs. All these were in favour of the French alliance, and strongly averse to war. The ambassador in Paris was another of the peace party, and nothing could be further from the truth than Napoleon's statement at St. Helena, that he provoked the war against the wishes of his Government. It was one of the hundred very opposite excuses he made for his own mistake in bringing on a war which ended in his ruin, and overrating his own military strength; for the very reason that his system was so successful in a short campaign made it peculiarly unsuitable for a prolonged struggle in a thinly populated country and among hostile peasants. According to Madame d'Abrantés, Napoleon had spies even stationed in the Imperial Palace of St. Petersburg, and two aides-de-camp of Alexander's, members of princely families in Poland, and also his sister-in-law, the Princess Amelia of Baden, have been pointed out as among those in French pay. All the year 1811 Napoleon was collecting minute information of the roads between Warsaw and Moscow, and Warsaw and St. Petersburg; the population and the resources of the villages, and the height of the thermometer at different periods in the year. He was ignorant of no details which could further his purpose except those to which he wilfully closed his eyes. Of Germany he felt perfectly secure. The

Germans might talk of liberty and fatherland, but without some external aid it was impossible they could relieve themselves of the pressure of France. "It is useless," says the Duke of Wellington,* "to consider what was the cause of the war between Napoleon and the Emperor of Russia: the ostensible causes of dispute were clearly removed, the diplomatists had agreed upon the principle of the mode of settling them all, and there would have been no difficulty; but at the very moment on which this principle of settlement was agreed upon, Napoleon moved armies, to the amount of about 600,000 men, into the dominions of the King of Prussia, in consequence of the treaty with Prussia which she had been induced to solicit; and the Emperor of Russia, seeing clearly that the war was not to be avoided, that the points upon which the settlement had been agreed were mere pretexts, and that his disgrace in the eyes of Europe in the first instance, and the ultimate destruction of the power and influence of his government, were the real objects of Napoleon, determined that he would resist upon the question of the Prussian treaty and occupation, which brought fairly before the public the real point at issue, and to the recollection of public men that States have an interest in the transactions of other States with their neighbours, and a right to question them. There was no French interest involved, and no real ground for war then between Napoleon and the Emperor of Russia. The war was occasioned solely by the desire of the former to fight a great battle, to gain a great victory, and to subject to his rule the power of Russia. There was an option for Napoleon to soften his policy towards those States on whose favour, or on whose behalf, the Russian interference was apprehended. That policy was a system of insult and menace. It was not influence growing out of treaty, but it was menace founded upon the success of former wars, the insolence of exorbitant power in the hands of new men, and the constant apprehensions which an innate sense of injustice produces even in such minds, that the oppressed must turn against the oppressor.

"It was in this light that the war was viewed by the French politicians of the day, and it is curious to observe their total absence of principle in the examination of the great

* Critique on the War of 1812, Wellington Correspondence for 1825.

question, peace or war. Nobody adverts to the injustice of this intended attack upon the Emperor of Russia, and in truth all admitted, save in positive terms, that the time was come at which it was absolutely necessary that Napoleon should bring under his subjection this one independent Power remaining on the continent of Europe. It is curious to observe his answer to each of those who ventured to hint objections to his proposed measures, each of which contained what he must have known at the time was a falsehood.

"It is believed he contemplated the war from the period of the refusal to give him the Russian Princess in marriage, the first idea of which occurred at Tilsit. This was the real secret of the treaty."

No one had better opportunities of ascertaining the exact truth than the Duke of Wellington, who commanded the armies of occupation in France for three years, and was intimate with all the leading statesmen and generals of Europe. His opinion ought to weigh with the historical compilers, who, to prove the infallibility of their hero, lay the blame of the war chiefly on Alexander, which was more than even Napoleon, so regardless of truth, ever ventured to do himself. "This famous war," he said in 1816, "this bold enterprise, I did not wish it—I did not want to fight. Alexander did not wish it any more than myself; but once in presence of each other, circumstances pushed us against each other; fatality did the rest."

De Maistre, writing from St. Petersburg early in January, 1811, says: "All eyes are at this moment on the two empires. The Russians have a great deal of the French impetuosity, hence their opinions are usually extreme; they are now divided into two parties; one is discouraged, and believes Russia quite unable to resist France; the other speaks of war with that Power as of an object which ought not to inspire the smallest alarm. It is the evident system of the Chancellor to do nothing which can displease France. Public opinion has pronounced strongly against him in this respect. Who can doubt that Count Romanzov is a good Russian, and a good subject of the Emperor? His system of adhesion to France and of unlimited complaisance is only founded on the belief that Russia is not in a state to resist, and that she must comply. In fact, it is only an error of the head; but who knows

if it is an error? . . . There is great fear that the courage of the master and the timidity of the minister may produce a mixed feeling quite disproportionate to circumstances, so that Russia may lose at once her honour and her safety. All political conversations are now passionately carried on, so any difference of opinion produces outrageous judgments and hatred. If war is declared I do not believe the Chancellor can hold his place. But I am much deceived if Napoleon is ready. He has serious affairs on hand, and probably wishes to finish in some way with Spain before he undertakes anything so great as the humiliation of Russia."

"The Emperor gave Prince K.* 50,000 roubles, with allowances, for his journey, to defray the cost of his mission to Paris, to carry congratulations on the great marriage, and told him with his usual kindness that if he spent more he would repay it on his return. The Prince sent in his bill for two million roubles, with the modest assurance that he should still be owed 150,000 roubles. This I can verify. After that let these gentlemen complain that the Emperor is mistrustful. A similar moral principle directs all actions, and he who merits suspicion on one point deserves to be suspected on all others."

In May, 1811, the Emperor granted three days' liberty in each week to the foot soldiers to enable them to increase their means by practising a trade. De Maistre writes, that in this way a soldier could gain four extra roubles a week.

As Alexander was riding fast along the quay on his return from parade (June 7th) his horse fell down upon him, bruising his head and leg, and putting out one finger. He was taken in a boat to the palace, where he refused to be bled; and the first order he gave when restored was for another review in two days' time. "The astonishing rapidity with which he flies in a carriage," writes De Maistre, "for I can call it nothing else, is a constant subject for apprehension. Everybody trembles for the catastrophe which must happen sooner or later."†

The same chronicler writes to the King of Sardinia, that

* Prince Kurakin (P).

† On the 23rd of January, 1811, the Grand Theatre at St. Petersburg was burnt.

Aratchaief agrees with Romanzov in being unwilling for war, persuaded that Russia was not in a fit state for it. "The Turkish war cost Russia at least 50,000 men and twenty-eight generals, of whom only three perished from shot. The air of these countries is pestilential to Russians. The Emperor gave full powers to M. Italinsky to conclude peace with Turkey; but he was a timid man, and weighed and consulted without cutting the knot. France has profited by this suspense to act as your Majesty has seen with success." He mentions the death of the wealthy Count Strogonof, September, 1811. He had contributed large sums towards the recent completion of the cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan, which Paul began in 1799, employing an architect named Vorinikhin, originally a serf, but the protégé and supposed son of Strogonof. It was opened for service on the 13th of September, 1811. The Count's family hoped that the Emperor would attend the funeral; as in Russia, when the sovereign wished to honour a deceased nobleman, he walks bareheaded behind his coffin from the house to the grave. But it was thought he would not do so on this occasion, as the Count was not in the Government service. His only merit was his wealth, and he bore a very indifferent character. However, the Empress went to see the corpse as it lay in state, and the Emperor came three days afterwards, just before the funeral procession set out. On September 9th De Maistre describes to the King of Sardinia a visit he paid to Admiral Tchichagof, who, from some dispute in the Russian Cabinet, gave up his post of Minister of Marine, and removed to Paris. His wife died there, and, obeying her last request, he brought her body to be buried in Russia, and wrote to the Emperor immediately he arrived to inform him of the reason of his return. "He was not in a state for argument; his wife, an Englishwoman, was lying dead in the next room. He saw nothing in Paris but what was very bad, no freedom. He was in despair; but converted by what he had seen in France, and now furious against Napoleon. He showed me in very great confidence the autograph letter of reply which the Emperor had written to him. What a letter, sire! The most tender and most delicate friend could not have written otherwise. What philosophy, what impassibility this prince must possess never

to have been alienated by the terrible speeches the admiral has uttered a thousand times against his Government, and even by a number of personal incidents which have certainly reached him, and only to judge his minister by his talents and his fidelity! In restoring the letter to the admiral, I said, 'You ought to die for the prince who wrote it.' 'O,' he said, 'you know I am attached to him; besides, I have the last wishes of my wife on that point. She ordered me on her deathbed to return without delay, and for the future only to think of serving my Emperor and my country. You know,' he added, 'that though sometimes criticising the prince I have always loved the man.' I denied the possibility of this distinction, and advised him to love the prince entirely instead of making a fatal anatomy of him. . . . At this moment he was no arguer. To-day he sees the Emperor. I am sure he will be all that he could wish, but I do not yet know if he desires to be a minister. The new organization has passed the council, but they assure me it is postponed to the first day of the year. I hope that, between now and the first of January, his Imperial Majesty will have learned something more of the modern mania of constitutions." De Maistre thought, like many Russians, that the projected changes in the form of government were instigated by traitors who played into Napoleon's hands, and were endeavouring to weaken Russia. He alludes to the rumour that, in case of a war, Alexander would take the command of his army, and calls it the heterogeneous alliance of a camp and a court. "Order," he writes, September 22nd, 1811, "understands nothing of disorder; and these savage wars should only be made by the cut-throats of each country. . . . There are, besides, so many signs of dissolution in this empire that I tremble. It is most alarming to see the revolutionary flight pass from the people even to the sovereign. It stops at the Senate; but the conspirators will carry it to the end. If there is a spectacle sadly pleasing, it is that of the intelligent men of a country sustaining the prerogative of the crown against the sovereign who is weary of it. At least, sire, they will stop it for some time, but he will always lean towards modern ideas in his system of government. I can hardly believe that he will not try some innovation. Let us hope it may not be fatal. . . .

There is nothing manly in Russia except the bayonet; all the rest is childish!"*

"Tchichagof's first interview with his sovereign was very tender. The Emperor said to him, 'I know what you have said of me, but I attribute all to a good motive.' He was restored to the Council, and sent to replace Kutuzov, who had been instructed to conclude a peace; but, being infatuated with a young Moldavian in the pay of the Porte, was inclined to grant much too favourable terms. Tchichagof received full powers either to make peace or to carry on the war with more vigour by forming a junction with the Montenegrins and Albanians, and raising up the whole Christian population of Turkey. His appointment was kept secret; but he had a fierce dispute with the peacefully-disposed Romanzov, and accused him of treason in wishing to relinquish the conquests on the Danube rather than prolong the war. The Chancellor embarrassed and delayed his project as much as possible, keeping back the necessary papers and information, and privately sending off a courier to warn Kutuzov to sign a peace at once if he did not wish to be deprived of his laurels and superseded. The old general, whom De Maistre describes as "one of the most charming of men,"† signed a peace, May 28th, before Tchichagof arrived. The Pruth was established as the boundary of the two empires, and the independence of Servia guaranteed with the constitution Russia had given it under the protection of the Czar; the Asiatic ports, long a point of dispute, were also left in the hands of Russia.

Kutuzov owned it was the prospect of a war with all Europe which alone could induce Russia to yield the principalities. But it is foreign pressure, or the fear of consequences, which keeps the Turks faithful to their engagements, or to the stipulations with regard to the rights of their Christian subjects. A broken treaty produced the war of 1806; and as soon as the Russian army left the southern shore of the Danube they again overran Servia, and England appeared in the curious light of the supporter of the re-establishment of a

* Dr. Echardt talks of the "weak, womanish character of the Slavonic race," but its historical fame hardly bears this out. The projected constitution was deferred, as Alexander would only grant it if the serfs were emancipated, and even Speranski dared not accomplish that.

† Also Wilson.

barbarous despotism in the place of a constitution bestowed by Russia. Czerny George fled to Austria, where he was thrown into prison, but released in 1814, on the remonstrance of Russia, and settled in Bessarabia on lands which Alexander granted to the Christian refugees from Turkey.

The return of Rostopchine to the public service was another proof that Alexander was capable, as even his enemies assert, of forgiving any personal injury, and that the welfare of the country was always his foremost thought. He well knew this nobleman's sentiments respecting himself; but he had guided the Russian helm in the midst of troubled waters, and was a man of tried firmness and integrity. Moscow would probably exhibit a reflection of the various factions agitating St. Petersburg, and a governor of true patriotism was especially needed in that independent city, where Rostopchine was popular; so Alexander offered him the post. It gave the Count command over the whole province, where he was responsible to no one but the Emperor, who was still the only member of the conspiracy of 1801 with whom he would hold the smallest communication, and the prospect of serving his country in the situation of all others he preferred, seemed to give him fresh life and vigour.*

Napoleon sent a Prussian officer, Knesebeck, February 9th, 1812, to Alexander with two conditions of peace—the absolute closing of all the Russian ports, and a joint expedition to India. Alexander, in this respect more clear-sighted than his

* December 16th, 1803, Rostopchine wrote to Zizianof, "You are highly esteemed by the Emperor. . . . It is the worst recommendation you can have." . . . "They tell me," he writes again, "the Emperor often speaks of you with interest, and reads your reports with pleasure. God grant these marks of favour do not irritate those against thee on the look out for approbation they do not deserve." Speaking of the irreligion of the country, which he associated with Liberalism, in 1804, he says, "I fear that these philosophical ideas are undermining the dyke of our tranquillity, and only aim at the destruction of the power of our country. The miners are numerous—the holes are deep. I truly do not know where it will all end, and I cannot understand how amongst all those grey and bald heads not one can be found who can represent to the Emperor to what all that will lead." His remarks about his Sovereign softened in tone as time went on, and it was evident that his respect for his judgment and ability considerably increased till, in looking back on the year 1812, he could write ten years afterwards, "Napoleon did not know the firmness of character of the Emperor of Russia." But this increase of respect was in proportion to the decline in Alexander's hopes of being able to establish a constitutional government in his country.

adversary, had told Caulaincourt that nothing would please England more than to see Russia and France go to war; and it equally pleased the German patriots. Knesebeck served with the Russian army in the campaign of 1807, and was recommended to Alexander by Tolstoi at Barstenstein. "Here it was,"* he writes, "that I learned to know and appreciate his noble heart, whose only desire was the happiness of mankind." Yet he advised Prussia to ally herself with France, to prevent her provinces being turned into a battle-field; although he quitted her service rather than fight against the Czar. The King desired him to tell Alexander that "he could not help marching against him, for he should lose the whole country." Knesebeck strove to prevent Russia from crossing her own frontiers. He found three opinions prevailing: one party, to which Bagration belonged, wished to push forward as far as possible; Barclay de Tolly only as far as the Vistula; and General Phull, charged with the construction of the entrenched camp at Drissa, wished to make that the stand-point of the Russian army. "All considered themselves," says Knesebeck, "unconquerable. Even the Emperor was much irritated when I once remarked that 300,000 men seemed to me too few. 'What!' he exclaimed, 'you count 300,000 Russians for nothing; you who have made a campaign with our troops!' I answered, I had seen how bravely they fought; that he appeared to me called by Providence to restore freedom to the world. This, indeed, was his aim, and the view of the King my master; who for this end submitted to the heavy sacrifice of fighting a time against his best friend on earth." On his requesting a private audience, Alexander appointed an hour about midnight, and showed him a private door in the Winter Palace by which, whenever a Cossack stood there, he might come to him in the evening, and the Cossack would show the way. Alone with the Emperor in his study, Knesebeck was acquainted with the strength of the Russian armies, and their various military plans. At that time Alexander believed that Napoleon would choose St. Petersburg as the aim of his operations; perhaps from his having

* Muffling's *Passages from My Life*. Considering Knesebeck's age when he wrote the letter quoted by Muffling (1844), some inaccuracy is not surprising.

held out a prospect of its plunder to his soldiers in the campaign of 1807. When Knesebeck took leave of him he said, "Tell the King that if I go to Kazan I shall not make peace." Near Dorpat, the Prussian met Czernichef, one of the attachés to the embassy at Paris, who had secured some important papers through bribery, showing that Napoleon was resolved on war. When Knesebeck asked what news he brought, "The news,"* said he, "that 600,000 men are marching against us."

Knesebeck laid great stress in his official report to Napoleon on the difficulties the French would encounter in a campaign in Russia. He also said that Alexander desired peace, and could give no better proof than by protesting most solemnly he would not overstep his own boundaries. Nevertheless, if he were attacked, he said that he should know how to defend himself.

In view of the movement of a European army, there was an emigration from Prussia and Switzerland into Russia. Madame de Staël wrote from Switzerland, July 23rd, 1811, to the Duchess of Saxe-Weimar to request the aid of her daughter-in-law in procuring a passport for Riga from the Czar. Stein, Schlegel, and Arndt, all went to St. Petersburg, with many others of less renown. Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg wished to take service in Russia in 1810, but Napoleon peremptorily forbade him to go there, offering him a commission in the French army. The Prince went to Italy to escape it, yet Napoleon in his memoirs asserts that he requested permission to be his aide-de-camp. Several Prussian officers sent in their resignation, rather than bear arms against Russia.

Never in the course of history had such formidable powers been arrayed against one empire; for on the side of Georgia the Persians were pursuing the war with renewed vigour, on the representations of the French ambassador at Teheran; General Andreossi had received orders to proceed to Constantinople, and effect a breach of the newly concluded peace, by "a promise to the Sultan of recovering for him all the

* Part of Czernichef's information was incorrect, and misled his government. A price was put upon his head by Napoleon, and he only escaped with great difficulty from France.

lately ceded territory, and even the Crimea." The attachment of Sweden to France and her hostility to Russia was a notorious fact, and few doubted that she would be ranged on the side of Alexander's enemies; but a Frenchman was now installed as Crown Prince of Sweden, without native prejudices, and who indeed owed his position to the Russians having seized Finland. Napoleon had made too sure of his alliance, treating it with contempt; but hearing that he had received overtures from Russia, a joint note was addressed by France and Austria, March 15th, 1812, advising him to adhere to their alliance to check the ambition of Russia, "who cannot resist the coalition;" they offered him at the same time the Neva for a boundary. Bernadotte secretly agreed to assist Napoleon if repaid not only by Finland, but Norway, a subsidy, and the restoration of Pomerania. His demands were rejected as unreasonable, and he accepted Alexander's previous proposal to guarantee Norway to Sweden, upon Denmark receiving an adequate indemnity in Pomerania; but in case Denmark utterly declined the exchange, Russia should still assist Sweden to obtain Norway, and in return Sweden was to aid Russia with a corps of 30,000 men, to operate in the north of Germany. A treaty was signed to this effect at Orebro, on the 24th of March, and at St. Petersburg, April 8th, 1812; and Bernadotte wrote to Napoleon: "If the Emperor of Russia was armed against the liberties of Europe, I should arm myself with you against him; but as he only fights for his dominions, I shall ally myself with him against you." Sweden reaped an immediate benefit from this treaty, by being free to conclude a peace with Great Britain, and reopen her ports to British commerce; and it cost her neither soldiers nor gold, for she did not bring any troops on to the Continent till 1813, when England paid for their maintenance; and as they were scarcely ever in action, she gained some credit with superficial observers without sustaining any loss. No approach to renewed friendship had been made between England and Russia, and Napoleon flattered himself with the hope of inducing the first to join him for the sake of crushing the "Colossus of the North." He offered peace on condition that Spain, Portugal, and Italy should be evacuated by French

and British troops, both by land and sea, and engaged that Spain should be governed constitutionally by the native Cortes under the reigning dynasty. Lord Castlereagh replied, that if the reigning dynasty meant Joseph instead of Ferdinand VII., a negotiation could not be entered into on such a basis. The reply was enough to show that the humiliation of Russia was not then a prime object with the British Cabinet, so there the matter rested. But Austria cordially joined with France, and was offered Illyria and a portion of the spoils of Russia as her reward. Bavaria contributed an army of 18,000 men, and Prussia, Italy, Holland, Naples, Denmark, Spain, Westphalia, Saxony, Würtemberg, Baden, and above all Poland, sent their contingents to join the Grand Army which was gathering in Germany, and increasing like a snow-ball on its way to Russia. In France the whole male population capable of bearing arms was called out by a decree, March 13th, and formed into three divisions, to guard the coast and frontier fortresses, to act as a militia in the provinces, and to march immediately for active service. It was calculated that in addition to the Grand Army of 600,000 men, there would be a reserve of 1,200,000 to fill up the gaps likely to appear in the French ranks, and the other countries were ordered to hold themselves in readiness to furnish fresh recruits.

In the event of a war, Alexander and his military council decided to make Drissa the point of concentration for the three armies, under Barclay de Tolly, Prince Bagration, and Tormassof. Count Essen commanded Riga, and Tormassof was destined to defend the Ukraine from Austria, whose active participation in the war added greatly to the difficulty of protecting the immense line of frontier. Meanwhile every possible misfortune seemed to beset the Empire. The plague was introduced to Odessa by an Austrian vessel from Constantinople, in which several of the crew had died on the road; and although it was put into quarantine, the officers bribed the Russian authorities to allow them go on shore, where one Austrian fell dead in a public-house, and it quickly spread over the place. The merchants closed their warehouses, the traders their shops, the physicians perished almost to a man, and two or three hundred corpses were buried every

day. There had been a dearth on the Austrian frontier since 1809, and now the scarcity was so great as to place a serious impediment to the concentration of the Russian troops. Thirty-six dépôts for food and recruits were established at different points, which it was supposed would lie near the enemy's probable line of march, and a new tax was imposed to defray the cost. The activity displayed in collecting this large force, with abundant material and magazines of every kind fully stored, during a continued state of warfare, and without any improvident loans, was not copied by those charged with the formation of an entrenched camp at Drissa. Orders were also given to strengthen Kief and Riga, to fortify Dunaburg and Bobruisk on the Beresina, and to form a tête-de-pont of considerable extent and strength at Borizov;* but not one of these was finished enough to be of any real service when the war actually broke out, for during the long Russian winter no masonry can be carried on. Still all these disadvantages were small when compared with that under which Russia laboured from the prestige attached to the French arms. Austerlitz and Friedland were remembered by none more than Alexander himself. "I shall not break the peace," he said to Lauriston. "If your master wishes to find me, he must come to seek me, for I shall not advance to meet him. He will lose in me a good ally, a firm friend. I am well aware what is his genius and military resources, but I too have good soldiers; we shall defend ourselves." In England it was feared there could be but one result of the French attack on Russia, and she offered no assistance either in money or men. Mr. Perceval stated in the House of Commons that Alexander engaged in the contest on his own responsibility, and without any advice from England; but the Russians were rather encouraged than otherwise by the knowledge that they were saddled with no foreign engagements or allies. They were competent to defend their own country, though all the world threatened her destruction; and the French soldiers, however confident in the ultimate good fortune of their chief, recollected that in the campaign of 1807 they had been told they should conquer a lasting peace on the Niemen; but after months of the most cruel warfare they had ever known, they

* Sir B. Wilson.

left off without gaining any additional advantage by the war; and that far from having conquered a peace, they had since never ceased to fight.

It was rumoured in 1812 that an attempt was made to assassinate Alexander.* The current of public opinion was running most strongly against his ministers, and early in the year Rostopchine wrote from Moscow to request him to dismiss Speranski. He was opposed to the war because he admired the French people; he had allowed himself to be flattered by Napoleon; he wished to introduce English and French forms of government, and a code which included the law of divorce, into Russia. All this was enough for the excited people. "He is but a learned schoolboy," cried Karamsin; and the military said, "what can be expected from the son of a priest."† There was no doubt some traitor about the Emperor in correspondence with the French, and report fixed the stigma on Speranski. His great enemies were Count Armfeldt, and Balachof, the minister of police, who resolved to find proofs which should accomplish his ruin. Armfeldt informed the Emperor that on a certain day and hour, at a place named, Speranski had a secret interview with the French ambassador, Lauriston, who still lingered at St. Petersburg, and had just delivered an insolent message from his master, that "Napoleon was indifferent to a negotiation, unless the half million of men now on their way to Russia should cause the Cabinet of St. Petersburg to think, and should induce the Czar to acknowledge his inferiority to France." After such a message no greater crime could be brought against a Russian minister than any communication with Lauriston; and Kurakin had orders, even before the message was given, to deliver the Czar's ultimatum at Paris. The Emperor desired the minister of police to inquire into the truth of this interview, and Balachof informed him it had really taken place. He was ignorant of the connivance of Balachof with Armfelt, and did not totally disbelieve the outcry now raised that Speranski was false to his country. "On March 29th, at seven in the evening," writes De Maistre, "the all-powerful Speranski, the secretary-general of the empire, in fact prime minister, came to have an audience with the

* This was commonly believed, but the particulars are not known.

† De Maistre.

Emperor. Some one said, 'Sir, you cannot enter, you must be announced.' He looked astonished, entered, and talked till eleven with the Emperor. Galitzin was waiting to present his report till Speranski had left the room. He was standing by the chimney-piece and said, 'Ah, M. Speranski, how long you have kept me!' He then saw that he was agitated so that he could hardly put his papers into their portfolio. His eyes were wet with tears. This was the day before the Emperor started for the army. Speranski took Galitzin's hand, and said, 'Adieu, Prince,' with a tone as if to say for ever. He left the palace, and went to M. Magnesky's, the first officer of his chancellery, his right hand and his intimate friend. They told him he had just been carried away, and all his papers were sealed. 'What, already!' said Speranski. He went home, and found General Balachof, military governor of St. Petersburg, and minister of the police of the empire, occupied in examining and sealing all his papers, a packet of which he had sent to the Emperor during the terrible tête-à-tête. The sealing lasted till three in the morning. A kibitka waited at his door. He mounted in it with a police officer and a postillion for Nijni Novgorod, at 250 leagues to the south-east of the capital, where he owns estates, and where the Governor was his friend. He was met on the road, wearing the two orders of St. Anne and St. Alexander Nevskoi. He apparently keeps his rank of privy councillor, and his offices. He is the widower of a Miss Stevens (an Englishwoman), who has left him one daughter, and his mother-in-law also lives with him. The Emperor has assured them of his good-will and protection, and permitted them to follow the exile. He has sent them a sum of 6000 roubles for their journey. Madame Magnesky was treated in the same way, and the Emperor gave her a carriage and 2000 roubles.

"The next morning there was only one cry in all the town of treason, revealed secrets, &c. &c. I hardly know what has been said. In spite of the privacy of the tête-à-tête some things transpired. I know for certain that the Emperor showed most condemnatory papers to Speranski, and said to him, 'Speak clearly and honestly, I wish you to defend yourself;' that he gave him the choice of being tried (before a legal tribunal), or of voluntary exile, and that Speranski took the

most prudent part of a full confession. The whole empire resounds with this adventure. Two hundred versts away from here, it is reported that forty people have been knouted, but those even who deserve it have not been so. We are lost in conjectures. A country where the examination of a crime of high treason is begun by a military governor, and ends in a tête-à-tête between the sovereign and the culprit, appears to me further removed from true civilization than the Iroquois. The Emperor has been warned by foreign experience of the danger of modern systems and German philosophy. Speranski and Magnesky were filled with it, but in a different way. The first was politically bad, an innovator, a republican to the marrow, and a great enemy of all hereditary distinctions. I believe that in several writings he spoke very resolutely of the Emperor. His fall pleases the nobility generally, who could not bear him; and even the common people, on account of the new taxes laid to his charge. It is often asked what more could he have desired? he was a privy councillor, secretary of the empire, chevalier of St. Alexander, confidant of the Emperor, with whom he dined whenever he liked, &c. Those who ask this question are quite unacquainted with that modern spirit which pervades Europe. So long as there is a church or an altar standing, nothing will satisfy it. With a truly satanical skill, it makes use even of sovereigns to strangle them. God grant that this empire may escape the fate which threatens it! It represents the Parthians in the time of the Romans. Besides, there would be no longer an equilibrium—I mean on the Continent; if it falls, one dare hardly reflect on the state of things.

“The Emperor will be with the vanguard on the frontier. He will not employ a Frenchman unless directly informed that the war causes him no pain. The two ambassadors are still in Paris and Petersburg. No French newspaper alludes to the war, or says a word against Russia. Napoleon is not ready. He will begin as soon as he is with an extraordinary explosion. Every intelligent man must pardon a Sovereign who refuses to say I am less than another, yet what will the Emperor of Russia do against Europe thrown into his arms? What can we expect of a country systematically corrupted for eighty or a hundred years? The great Emperor of

Russia, as you know, has not been fortunate until now, so that one cannot help being uneasy."

Speranski said the European war had become a duel between two gentlemen.

"The result of these immense preparations may bring repose, for the two chiefs are mutually alarmed; but what is to prevent these two gentlemen from sharing Europe? Napoleon will make no other proposal after failing in his project of intimidating Alexander (April 21st, 1812). The correspondence of the Russian Government is so great, that in the foreign office it is distributed by region. One has French, another Asiatic, &c., and each in his class calls himself chef d'expédition. M. Gervais, a particular friend of Speranski, had the French. His place is given to Koslovski. . . . They found at Speranski's house all the ciphers, even the private cipher of the chancellor; a fair copy of the Paris correspondence, and an exact detail of what there is most secret in the desks of the Ministers of the Interior and of the Finances (the last was Gourief, one of Speranski's enemies). I would not restrain the legitimate exercise of the sublime right of pardon, but there are crimes which are entirely cut off from it: the pardon of a parricide, a regicide, &c., is to me a pure scandal, and I have already heard this bounty of the Emperor very ill spoken of. Every serf thinks himself above a popovitz or priest's son, and they call Speranski by this term as an insult; but some peasants said, 'They have ruined him at Court because he wished to render us free.'"

Speranski was an imprudent talker, and at Erfurt initiated Napoleon into all the intricacies of the Russian administration and the various politics of different ministers in a long conversation; after which Napoleon, half joking, requested Alexander "to make this gentleman over to him in exchange for some kingdom." He was a Freemason, and concerned with Armfeldt in a secret society which was brought to light by Count Razoumovski. He had formed the strange idea of uniting the Russian secret societies with those of Europe, and by their means regenerating the Russian Empire. Rostopchine hated him on account of his scepticism and republican or constitutional proclivities, as, like the Emperor Francis, he called constitutions the malady of the century. "It is a fever,"^a



he said, " more dangerous than all fevers and plagues, for it is not only epidemic and contagious, but it is gained by reading and study." Speranski had received great kindness from Alexander, who raised him from obscurity, and it seems very unlikely that he really uttered publicly the calumnious expressions of which he has been sometimes accused. On the contrary, he said to more than one foreign statesman, " The Emperor's character is the sole hope, I dare to say it, which remains to well-intentioned and enlightened men in the chaos of our government." Stein, who was then in St. Petersburg, had a high esteem for him, and was amazed and perplexed at his fate.

If Speranski was entirely innocent, it was a melancholy comment on the expediency of a constitutional government for his country that he should have preferred to be judged by the Emperor rather than by any legal tribunal in the empire. If the government had already been a limited monarchy, and the tribunals the least corrupt in the world, it would have been all the same at that crisis, and his case would never have been calmly weighed. The nation was worked up to a state of fury against its enemies, and incapable of hearing reason, and exile to his estates was the most lenient punishment he could have received. But when the French were in possession of Moscow, and talked of marching on to Nijni Novgorod, he was ordered to move his residence to Perm, 600 miles further to the north-east; and as the loss of his salary as a minister had reduced him to poverty, the Emperor allowed him a suitable pension. In 1813 he addressed a memorial to Alexander to justify himself, and remind his sovereign of his real services to the State. The Emperor had given out that he wished to establish a stable régime, based on the laws. " Men changed," said Speranski, " plans changed with them, but the fundamental thought was always the same, legality in place of arbitrary power. Till 1808 I was only a simple spectator of these reforms. When it pleased your majesty to charge me, by the medium of Count Kotchoubey, under whose orders I then found myself, to reduce a plan for the organization of the administration and the tribunal of the empire, I accepted this task with joy, and I thought I should have fulfilled it with all the zeal of which I was capable." The letter was long in

reaching its destination, for Alexander was in the midst of his last campaign against France ; but in 1815, when he returned to Russia, he allowed Speranski to remove to a short distance from St. Petersburg, near old Novgorod ; and there the ex-minister amused himself with educating his daughter and the translation of the works of Thomas à Kempis, which he published in 1819.

On August 30th, 1816, Alexander appointed Speranski to the civil governorship of Penza, and stated in a ukaz that, having received a serious denunciation against Speranski in 1812, on the eve of his departure for the army, he was unable to examine it closely ; but the facts alleged were so serious that the immediate removal of the accused from any part in public affairs seemed to be only prudent. He had since made minute inquiries into the case, but did not consider the suspicion was well founded. At the same time he presented him with a considerable estate, as if to compensate him for his unmerited punishment. Speranski was restored to his honours and was created a count by Nicholas, whose son, Alexander II., he instructed in the art of government. Like most Russians, he appears to have abandoned his republican theories with his youth, for he was a member of the Commission of Inquiry into the conspiracy of 1825, and strongly advised Nicholas to "punish the traitors with severity." He continued to work on his "Digest of the Russian Laws," and completed it before his death in 1839.

With the recent examples of patriotic agitation during the French and Prussian war in 1870, of the innocent men accused of treason or collusion with the enemy, and the wholesale expulsion of the German residents from France, it is not surprising that suspicions were excited in Russia during 1811-12 against all of foreign sympathies or extraction, when the whole Continent was in arms for her destruction, and it was only the extreme justice of the sovereign which averted more serious consequences. Since the reign of Paul the Jesuits had educated many of the Russian youth, and were permitted to establish schools in Siberia, Georgia, the Crimea, and Odessa. Alexander frankly owned their tenets were far from his own, but he considered they might be useful in civilizing his people. In 1811 the Illuminators, a German sect embracing many Russian nobles, presented an address to the Emperor, stating

that the Jesuits were dangerous to the Government, and appealed to the law which placed all schools under the direction of the universities, whereupon Alexander erected the Jesuit college at Polotzk into a university, and gave it the superintendence of its own schools. "The Emperor," says De Maistre, "is particularly admirable in this respect, for I know very well what prejudices he had to conquer on this point, and such a resolution could only come from a right heart and spirit of justice." Alexander had read a book by De Maistre called "Four Chapters on Russia," and wished to take the author into his service, for his brother Xavier was already a distinguished Russian officer; but De Maistre declined, lest it should increase his difficulty in furthering the interests of the King of Sardinia, whose prospects now looked especially dark, as Austria had accepted a portion of his former territories from France. Prince Kurakin was so anxious to preserve peace that he had kept himself in wilful ignorance of this treaty, lest his Sovereign should make it a cause of war. When Alexander joined his army at Vilna, in April, 1812, De Maistre also repaired there, and on the 20th was called to a private conference with the Emperor on the subject of the Jesuits, who had again been represented to him as an intriguing, traitorous community, secretly undermining the religion and morals of the State. They were not permitted to exist as a body anywhere out of Russia, and an ordinary Roman Catholic would have advised their expulsion. But the staunch supporters of the Church and the Throne, like De Maistre, regarded the Low Church party among Roman Catholics as one great influence in producing the French revolution, and the tide of feeling was turning in their favour. He founded his only hope of Russia's eventual success on Alexander's kindness to the Jesuits, for he asserted that no sovereign had prospered who persecuted them. He told the Emperor they were the strongest supporters of monarchy. "Conspirators have stabbed it after inducing it to throw away its shield. I know, Sire," he added, "that lately the Jesuits were praised to General Balachof because *one of them had proposed to poison Bonaparte*, and that this report much troubled you, and I know what you have done. But, Sire, does it not strike you that any man who says he has been told such a thing is worthy of the rope if he cannot name the

person? and it is so in this case. Besides, the accuser was Magnewsky, who some days later was declared guilty of high treason. You see, Sire, by what wretches the Jesuits are hated, and what execrable manœuvres are employed against them."

"I had never," he writes, "talked tête-à-tête with the Emperor, and I often imagined I never should." He therefore took the opportunity of stating his own views on the subject of the war, when Alexander asked him what he thought of the present state of affairs.

"Many princes," he said, "might see in their disadvantage with a usurper a proof of their inferiority. There is no idea more false or more fatal. Gold cannot cut iron; is it because it is worthless? on the contrary. No man can do everything, and there is no greatness, no dignity, which does not entail some inconvenience. Your Majesty must be aware of your own disadvantage in this respect." He went on to advise Alexander very strongly not to command his own army in the approaching war.

"The Emperor," he adds in the letter in which he reports this conversation, "thinks it certain that he will be beaten first, but that he will hold firm. This first persuasion is unfortunate. . . . I said to him 'In Russia there is a natural antipathy between the men of the Court and of the camp, stronger perhaps than between the courtiers and the priests; more dangerous. A courtier is equally respectable and necessary, but in his place. He has never succeeded in war. Intrigue may be called the shadow of power. It will never abandon it. As soon as the Sovereign arrives at the camp the generals will occupy themselves more with him than with the enemy. They will dispute for his favour or fear for his person; opinions will come into collision, for no one will dare to contradict his. In ordinary times this is nothing, as matters balance each other; and besides, in our wars it has never been a question of safety. But now it is different.'" This is how the Emperor justifies commanding his own troops. "There is no general now in Russia capable of being put at the head of her immense army. The Emperor has at least the weight of his name." De Maistre considered it a strong objection that if Alexander commanded in person he would take his brother

with him, who always urged peace in the middle of a campaign. He told Alexander if he was called upon to advise him he should recommend him to avoid councils of war, so as to prevent quarrels and disputes, and merely to consult general officers apart, and act himself; also to adopt to some degree the hard and expedient practices of the enemy, as far as it was consistent with "his own excellent government. It is necessary to punish oftener and more severely: it is necessary to reward oftener, and in a more striking and public manner."

Alexander even then thought of dethroning Napoleon, though he doubted the stability of a Bourbon government. "He believes himself decidedly inferior to the French on the side of talents, and for this reason he has thought of filing off their force instead of breaking through it. He gave De Maistre 20,000 roubles for the support of his embassy and his exiled countrymen through that year. The ambassador laments that at such a moment they should be obliged to put him to so much expense."

Alexander wrote to Czartoriski two days before Speranski's arrest, saying that his letters had left him too little hope of obtaining the alliance of the Poles to authorize him to act. "I have therefore resigned myself to events, and have avoided provoking a struggle of which I see all the danger without a hope of escape. . . . The rupture with France is inevitable. Napoleon's object is to annihilate, or at least to humble, the only Power left standing in Europe, and to succeed he advances pretensions incompatible with her honour. He also wishes to stop all commerce with neutral Powers. It would deprive us of all remaining. At the same time he exacts that, deprived of the means of exporting our own productions, we should put no limit to the importation of objects of French luxury, which we have prohibited, not being rich enough to pay for them. As I can never consent to such proposals, war will probably follow in spite of all Russia has done to avoid it. Torrents of blood will flow, and humanity once more be sacrificed to the insatiable ambition of a man born apparently for her misfortune. You are too clear sighted not to see how foreign to him are any liberal ideas towards your country. In his confidential conversations with the envoys of Austria and Prussia, the tone in which he explained himself shows his character and the

little affection he bears towards your countrymen, whom he only regards as the instruments of his hatred towards Russia." Alexander then put several questions to Czartoriski, as to the advisability of bestowing a separate constitutional government at once on Lithuania, or adjourning it till, in consequence of some success, he might extend it to entire Poland. Also as to the administration of the provinces if the Russians occupy them, independently of Warsaw ; as he could hardly venture to calculate on the chances of war enabling him to enter that city. He encloses two plans.

"I shall not enter again on the two alternatives this struggle offers to Russia, having exhausted the subject in previous letters. I shall only recall the immense extent of territory that the Russian armies possess in their rear to retire upon, and avoid being surrounded, and the difficulties which will proportionately increase for Napoleon as he advances from his resources. If the war begins, we are resolved here to lay down our arms no more. The military resources we have collected are very great, and the public spirit is excellent, differing essentially from what you have seen on the two former occasions. There is no more of that boasting which made them despise their enemy.

"On the contrary, they appreciate all his strength ; they believe that reverses are very possible ; but they are resolved to sustain the honour of the empire to the utmost extremity.

"What an effect a union with the Poles would have under these circumstances ! It would be immense, and this mass of Germans, led by force, would certainly follow their example. Is it impossible to produce so great a result ? The cause is that of oppressed Europe.

"You who have always been so zealous in this cause will feel, I do not doubt, the immense advantages resulting to Europe, and humanity in general, if it triumphs ; and, as a Pole, you cannot blind yourself to the misfortunes to which your country exposes herself if, following the French standards, she gives Russia a right to avenge herself upon her for all the ill that she will have done.

"I have used, as you advised, great moderation towards your countrymen in our provinces, who are known to be ill intentioned towards Russia, hoping this moderation would be

appreciated. But it has produced rather the idea that it is a kind of fear which obliges us to dissimulate with them. The war once begun, it would be important to determine the line of conduct we should follow towards them. The general safety depends on it, and I wish to hear your ideas on this subject. I must ask you to address your answer to Vilna, making it pass through M. Lanskoï, the governor of Grodno, or in any other manner most prompt and sure.

"I see I have not answered the postscript of your last letter of January 25th. The idea of bringing Napoleon willingly to regenerate Poland, by putting it under the rule of a king who is also Emperor of Russia, is chimerical. He would never consent to a result so advantageous to Russia, and above all, at a moment when he is only occupied with destroying her. He will never consider Russia's inability to prevent him from invading Prussia as an act of complaisance; an inability which results from a total want of energy on the part of the King of Prussia, who is willing to see his monarchy reduced to Berlin and his palace.

"Adieu, my dear friend. Providence alone knows the issue reserved for these great events. I should have been very glad to have seen you again at Vilna, where I set out for in three days, if only for a short time, but I dare not propose it, being aware of the danger you would incur by such a step," &c.

In answer, Czartoriski writes to break off all connection with Russia. Poland had just been solemnly proclaimed by a general confederation of the Diet, and his father was placed at the head of it; so that whatever her fate was to be he must share it. The general patriotic enthusiasm had spread to him, and two countries which ought to be sisters now regarded each other with inveterate hatred. He was unwilling to bear arms against his former friend; he felt continual alarm for his personal safety, but a higher duty called him, and he now implored that Alexander would absolve him from the oath of allegiance.

Yet the well-informed Poles were perfectly aware that it was only as a political weapon, not from any sentimental attachment to their country, that they could hope for the restoration of their nationality from the avowed enemy of patriots and patriotism, and the general destroyer of inde-

pendence. Where was the freedom of the second republic of Venice, first created, then sold by France? Where were the Dutch, Cisalpine, Ligurian, and Swiss republics, which Napoleon had guaranteed at the treaty of Lunéville? His mode of dealing with patriotic enthusiasm was illustrated by his conduct in Spain, where a gallant people his allies had been driven by French treachery to sustain a desperate struggle for their existence. "Belliard is too weak," he writes to Joseph; "with the Spaniards you must be severe. I have arrested and shot fifteen of them here: order thirty to be arrested at Madrid. When they are treated with gentleness this canaille thinks itself invulnerable. When some are hanged they begin to be disgusted with the game, and become humble and submissive as they ought to be." Again (January 12th, 1808): "You must hang at Madrid twenty of the *plus mauvais sujets*. To-morrow I shall hang seventeen. If they do not rid Madrid of 100 of them, they will have done nothing. Of these 100, hang or shoot twelve or fifteen, and send the rest to the galleys. I have only had peace in France and restored confidence to wealthy people by arresting 200 firebrands, and sending them to the colonies. From that moment the temper of the capital changed as with a breath. . . . The canaille only love and esteem those whom they fear." Such being his feeling for democrats, whose country he had seized and wished to divide without any of the provocation Poland had formerly given to Russia, why should she have supposed that she was a sole exception, and that his heart was particularly moved by her national wrongs? When he wished to excite the French people against Russia and Prussia in 1806, he stated in the *Moniteur* that the partition of Poland was the greatest crime of modern times, and in November of the same year he had said to the deputies of Polish Prussia, headed by Xavier Dialynski, "When I shall see 30,000 or 40,000 armed Poles, I shall proclaim your independence at Warsaw, and when it comes from me it will be unassailable." These and many more had shed their blood in the French service; yet in that same campaign he had sent word to Austria, who possessed one of their capitals, that he did not wish to entrench on Austrian Poland. He had been at war with the three partitioning Powers, but their dismembered portions were still as far from being united as

before. He now told them that until Russia was humiliated he was powerless as regarded their country; and the war with Russia assumed in their eyes the aspect of a war for independence.

"To re-establish a country," wrote Oginski to Alexander in 1811, "a character of moderation, of disinterestedness, of generosity is necessary, incompatible with the avidity of a conqueror, and the wish to weaken, divide, and rule the affairs of the entire world. . . . Napoleon changes his resolutions as quickly as he makes them. He has never occupied himself with the happiness of men; how can we presume that, insensible to the unhappy fate of Europe, he should wish to re-establish Poland in assuring her a free and independent government?" This view was confirmed by Napoleon's own words to Narbonne and the Abbé Pradt. He said to Narbonne: * "I am pushed to this adventurous war by political reasons. A family union would not have prevented it." His long endeavour to render the French an imitation of the old Roman empire had impressed him with the fear that, like Rome, France was destined to be overthrown by an irruption from the North. The sight of the army of a northern Power trespassing on Italian soil, when Suvorov entered Italy thirteen years before, revived in an Italian the recollection of Attila and his Huns, and the circumstances of the battle of Zurich and the quarrel between Russia and Austria having alone prevented them from penetrating into France, had made a deep impression upon him. "The answer is," he continued, "throw them back beyond Moscow; and when can Europe do it, if not now, and through me?"

"I like the Poles on the field of battle. They are a valiant race, but as to their deliberative assemblies, their *liberum veto*, their Diets on horseback, with naked swords, I want nothing of all that. It is quite enough to have on our continent that mad Cortes of Cadiz. The resurrection of a semi-republican Poland would be an uninterrupted embarrassment as long as it lasted. It could not live under its old form without too great a sacrifice. It would have no strength but by a diabolical propaganda. I have thought over it well. I wish in Poland a camp, and not a forum. We shall have

* Villemain's *Souvenirs de Narbonne*.

to call a Diet to collect the levies I must raise there, but nothing beyond. I will make against Alexander the war *à armes courtoises* with 200,000 firebrands and 500,000 soldiers, without insurrection. I shall take away Moscow from him. I shall throw him into Asia. But I shall not suffer a club at Warsaw or at Cracow, nor elsewhere. It is not for me to remake a republican hearth in Europe with a nation of 20,000,000 men, warlike without industry, who touch on Bohemia, the old land of the Hussites, and would be capable of I know not what demagogical mysticism, which would not agree with us. I only want Poland as a disciplined force to furnish the field of battle. The whole question is there. To excite in Poland the national fibre without awakening the liberal fibre, and for that to pass quickly, to go further, to draw its whole male population, to push it towards the North, striking before itself with head and heart, and by the same blow, though in a different way, to dazzle its enemies and its auxiliaries by its rapidity."

To all this Narbonne answered, that the Emperor himself declared, that though Prussia and Austria were conquered at Berlin and at Vienna, Russia would not be conquered at Moscow.

"I have wished amicably," continued Napoleon, "to push Alexander towards Asia. I offered him Constantinople, that is true. He wished for less, first. I have agreed to Finland, which was at his door, and in his suburbs. It was perhaps a great fault, but it is reparable by the war."

"Without Russia," he said to the Abbé Pradt,* "the continental system is mere folly. Moscow is the heart of the empire. I am expected there. Besides, I shall carry on the war with Polish blood."

General Jomini, then in the French service, asserts that Napoleon's plans were hardly fixed at the beginning of the Russian campaign, where all was to depend on a presumed great victory at the beginning of the war. "He was at once the most decided and the most undecided of men."

The Duke of Wellington, writing on the campaign twelve

* Napoleon read Pradt's book at St. Helena, and said of his praise of Alexander, his amiable virtues, his brilliant qualities, &c., "Certainly he is not a French bishop: he is an Eastern magi, an adorer of the rising sun."

years afterwards, says it was evidently Napoleon's plan to attack the camp at Drissa, with one great blow to seize the person of the Emperor of Russia, and then to dictate what terms of peace he chose. This seems to have become known to those of Alexander's counsellors, who urged a different course from that originally planned, and particularly dwelt on the absolute necessity of his keeping at a distance from the army. He might have abdicated if taken prisoner; but Napoleon knew the unpopularity of his heir, and that the Russians would make heavy sacrifices to obtain the restoration of their sovereign.

Wishing to gain time and information, he sent Narbonne to Vilna, to assure Alexander of his peaceful inclinations (April 25th), and to invite him to Dresden. Two days after Narbonne had started, Prince Kurakin delivered his master's ultimatum to Napoleon. It required the entire evacuation of Prussia and Swedish Pomerania, and the garrison of Dantzic to be reduced to the number permitted by the treaty of Tilsit. He offered to accept an indemnity for Oldenburg; he was willing to enter into commercial arrangements with France, and to make some modification of the ukaz of December 31st, 1810; but the ambassador was instructed to demand his passports if the conditions contained in the note were not forthwith admitted. Napoleon returned no answer till he had reached Dresden, and then sent an evasive one, as he wished first to learn the result of Narbonne's mission, that nobleman having been directed to flatter or to intimidate, as he thought most likely to gain his object of obtaining great concessions from Russia, or deluding Alexander into false security. "He was the only courtier who preserved the refinement in manners and conversation of the old Court of France," says Madame Choiseul Gouffier, "for he had been gentleman-in-waiting to the daughters of Louis XV.; and Napoleon therefore selected him as worthy to be heard by a sovereign so enlightened and polished as Alexander."

Before Narbonne left Paris, he strongly advised Napoleon once more to raise Poland and Lithuania again into a kingdom, and not to push on to Moscow till the army had rested for a winter at Warsaw and Vilna. But Napoleon persisted that everything would be more easily accomplished by one great

blow. "A barbarous people are superstitious, and have simple ideas. A terrible blow at the heart of the empire on Moscow the great, Moscow the holy, gives over to me in a moment this blind mass, who are without a resource. I know Alexander. One must strike his imagination with a great effect of boldness and of power. Perhaps he will yield before the aspect alone of my unheard-of armament, or Russia may be crushed under my hatred of England. At the head of 400,000 men, fitted out beyond all precedent with reserves on our flanks, Lithuanian corps of the same blood as a part of the population we have to cross, I do not fear this length of road, bordered by deserts, at the end of which is conquest and peace. After all, this long road is the road to India. I have the charts and the state of the population we should have to traverse from Erivan and Tiflis to the English possessions in India. It would be a campaign, not so rude perhaps as that which awaits us in less than three months. Moscow is 3000 kilometres from Paris, and there are a few battles on the road. Suppose Moscow taken, Russia beaten, the Czar reconciled or dead—from some palace conspiracy perhaps—a new and dependent throne, and tell me if for a great French army and auxiliaries round Tiflis there is no possible access to the Ganges. The whole of Western Europe confederated under our eagles, penetrating Russia and marching right on its palladium, Moscow; great armies of French reserves and allies; Macdonald and Schwartzenberg covering our flanks and the Polish provinces; the Muscovite people, between its great lords ruined and its serfs discontented, crossed by such an invasion as it has never seen; a Russian Emperor, who will be conquered in person if he fights, and discredited if he flies; and at the other extremity of his invaded empire, old Turkey, strengthened by my alliance, occupying Kutuzov and his Cossacks."

Napoleon set out for Dresden, May 9th, with the Empress and a brilliant Court. The Sovereigns of Austria, the King of Prussia, and almost all the smaller princes of Germany were assembled in the Saxon capital; but the Grand Duchess Mary of Saxe-Weimar retired into Bohemia to avoid the sight of the French army on its road to her brother's empire. Her



husband dared not let her go to Russia, lest France should make it a pretext for an extra levy on Saxe-Weimar. The French Court remained at Dresden till May 29th, and held a series of brilliant fêtes to amuse the royal guests, who looked upon the war with Russia in a very favourable light, and considered her empire as inevitably doomed. Every one was to profit to some extent by her fall; and the riches of Moscow were to defray the whole cost, and to send back the auxiliary generals loaded with spoil. The King of Prussia was to receive the Baltic provinces if his troops, under the command of a French general, could conquer them; and in return, his eldest son was to marry a member of the Bonaparte family. The eldest daughter was also marked out as the wife of a scion of that house. There was much vindictiveness in the character of the Emperor Francis, and he had never liked Russia since his quarrel with Paul. He was less jealous of Napoleon than of Alexander, and would have been glad to see him sink as low in humiliation as he had done himself. The cold-blooded Frederick William was decided in his alliance as much by the hope of the Baltic provinces as by fear of the French. It is said that he even tried to claim them after the war. Of the smaller German Powers, each army was to be led by a prince of its ruling family; so that Napoleon was accompanied in this campaign by several sovereigns and crown princes, some nearly related to Alexander or his wife. Of the brothers of the Empress-Dowager, one fought in the Russian army, another served in Poland, and two more were enrolled in the invading force. Prince Schwartzemberg, a thorough Gallican, having long lived in Paris, was chosen to command the Austrian army, a French general being placed at his side. Napoleon stipulated that, as Sultan Mahmoud was believed to be warlike, he should command the Turkish army in person if he joined France against Russia. This was merely for the sake of including another sovereign in his train, and showed ignorance of the Turkish customs, as it has long been contrary to law for a Sultan to appear on the field of battle. The Turks were offended, and it gave them an additional reason for refusing to join France.

Napoleon waited at Dresden to receive Narbonne, who

returned from Vilna saying that, although he had seen Alexander only for an hour, he was convinced of his resolution : and he had also a clear and precise system of defence. He had found the Russians neither depressed nor boasting, and their Emperor had told him they preferred war to a disgraceful peace ; they should take good care not to risk a battle with so formidable an adversary, but if attacked they should make every sacrifice to protract the war and drive back the invaders.

Napoleon's counsellors thought his mind began to misgive him as to the possibility of conquering Russia in one campaign, and he had hoped that Alexander would be awed by the aspect of the French preparations, and feel his isolated position so far as to own himself vanquished, and give Napoleon a reason for entrenching himself in Poland before he marched on Moscow. He seemed to try and sustain the hearts of those about him by depreciating his rival's strength of character, and talking incessantly of his own victories. He said to Narbonne, "We shall see if his constancy will hold out against the proof of events. Deceived by the counsels of England, they wish for war. I will make it." He also told General Desolles at Posen that "the assemblage at Dresden not having persuaded Alexander to make peace, we must now look for it only from war ;" and that he wished to annihilate the power of Russia in his lifetime—it was too formidable a rivalry to bequeath to whoever should be his heir. He informed his soldiers that "the second Polish war had begun ; the Russians would find them still the same as at Friedland and Austerlitz ; and the peace concluded would terminate the fatal influence which Russia had exercised in Europe for the last fifty years."

In the course of the following summer 651,358 men, 187,121 horses, and 1372 cannon crossed the frontiers of Poland, Courland, and Austria into Russia.

"When, in 1812," writes Baron Stein, "the Emperor Alexander entered upon his struggle with Napoleon, he took for his motto, "Confiance en Dieu, courage, persévérance, union ;" and with "the eye of faith, which boldly and undazzled looks up to Heaven," he surrendered himself to the

inspirations of his large-hearted, noble soul, and hurled the giant to the ground. Human reason can see what lies immediately before it, but cannot penetrate through the obscurity of the distant future. There we must be guided by our sense of duty, by trust in God, and casting away all selfishness.”*

* Letter to Prince Leopold (afterwards King of the Belgians) when he refused the crown of Greece in 1830. See Life of Baron Stockmar.

CHAPTER IV.

1812.

THE FRENCH CAMPAIGN IN RUSSIA.

ÆTAT. 34.

THE Russian patriotism and self-sacrifice in 1812 is quite unparalleled in history, and could only have been called forth in a united nation, and by the strong government of a popular prince. The opponents of Speranski were right in believing that before such a gigantic peril it would disorganize the country and weaken the ties of allegiance to introduce a limited monarchy; and they justified the charges they brought against him by asserting that he was prepared to force such a system on the Emperor, for the sake of bringing his own party into office, to make concessions to France, and to preserve peace. The emancipation of the serfs at that hour would have alienated the nobility, and probably caused a palace revolution; while on the other side nothing but an oligarchy could result from a limited monarchy while the serfs were enslaved. Even Speranski dared not support any measure of emancipation unless Russia could insure a long period of peace, and a peace without humiliation was no longer possible with France.

"The Emperor," writes De Maistre in 1806, "always talks of the country and the nation. His last proclamation was all worded in that style, the Emperor only coming in once like a parenthesis. He is evidently a republican at heart, and thinks that a more just mode of government than his own." The Count regrets it. Yet even holding these opinions, Alexander was hardly inconsistent when, in circumstances quite unprecedented, he refused, on the strong representation of the Senate, to relinquish the helm in 1812. Who else, in that political whirlpool, could have guided the rudder? Would a Russian parliament have lasted longer than the chambers



convoked by Louis XVI.? De Maistre calls Alexander's rule "the mildest sovereignty that had ever existed," and his subjects were too well satisfied with their autocrat to wish to change his authority for a ministerial despot.

The Emperor was well received in Vilna, and its volatile people enjoyed the festivities accompanying the military Court. A detachment of the Guards was quartered in the town, and the regiments of the line at Wilkomir, a town about thirty-five miles distant, where Alexander spent much of his time under canvas, besides visiting the Polish nobles in the neighbourhood. He was long affectionately remembered there: his visit to Towiany, where the infirm proprietor met him with all state in the hall, and was assisted back to his chair in the drawing-room on the Emperor's arm; the evening he passed with the Moriconis when his carriage had been upset; how he helped the guests at supper like any other gentleman, though not in the habit of taking any himself; and when he left at five the next morning found the ladies all waiting to see him off, contrary to his express wish that no one would rise early on his account. The fatigued old woman whom he took into Vilna in his open carriage, having passed her walking on the road from Wilkomir, and the village church where the priest saw the young Russian nobleman alone among the simple worshippers, and gave him his blessing, unconscious that for the first and last time he met his Emperor. He bought Zakret from General Benningsen, which made him a citizen of Vilna; but its beautiful gardens, orange-groves, and hot-houses were recklessly destroyed six weeks later by the French, and the mansion, afterwards turned into a hospital, was burnt down on their retreat.

Count Romanzov, Nesselrode,* late Secretary of Legation in Paris, Tolstoi, Volkonski, Kotchoubey, Admiral Shiskov, Speranski's successor, Aratchaief, Armfeldt, Balachof, Phull, Wolzogen, Count Cancrine, the Princes of Oldenburg, Stein, De Maistre, and Constantine were assembled at Vilna, and the Marquis de Paulucci joined them from the army in

* Paul corresponded with Lavater, the physiognomist; and Nesselrode's profession was a result of his studies, for seeing him among the guards, he said he had the face of a diplomatist, and put him in the Foreign Office.

Georgia. Most conflicting reports were received as to Napoleon's plans, and throughout the spring of 1812 Lauriston asserted in St. Petersburg that there would be no war. Austria also tried to blind Russia to the approaching storm, though nearly a year before she had offered a passage to the French armies through her territories. While she addressed the joint note to Sweden, her ambassador delivered a despatch to Romanzov, "containing a thousand fine things," writes De Maistre, and he felt his position so keenly that he hardly dared show himself in St. Petersburg. In the mean time Vilna prospered from the money spent by the army, which scrupulously paid for its supplies. In common with all Lithuania she had suffered grievously from the continental blockade, one of the many evils France bestowed on Poland, for Riga was the outlet of her commerce; but the enormous stores of provisions purchased for the troops in other parts of Russia caused great scarcity.* Narbonne arrived early in May with no new proposal, but to congratulate Alexander on his arrival, and to invite him to Dresden. In an hour's interview the Czar set forth the moderation of his own conduct, his just causes of complaint, and that he could not conciliate the terms offered to him with the honour of his crown, the interest of his empire, and his desire to avoid shedding blood. "I do not delude myself," he said: "I know what a great general Napoleon is; but, as you see," pointing to the map of Russia, "I have on my side time and space. There is not a corner of this territory hostile to you where I will not retire, no distant point I will not defend before consenting to a shameful peace. I do not attack, but I will not lay down my arms while a foreign soldier remains in Russia." Narbonne said after-

* "The misery on the Russian frontier," writes De Maistre, "is as extreme as beyond it. Prussia is in a terrible state; the peasants kill their cattle, and officers blow out their brains. The spring is very late, and taxes enormous. Many people, particularly in foreign countries, say Why waste themselves uselessly—why not attack? Is the Emperor not as greedy of glory as any other young and powerful prince? He knows his business, if he does not wish to begin. . . . There is no doubt Napoleon hopes the Emperor will consume himself: he counts on the continuance of the closed ports, want of money, famine, sickness, &c.; after that he will attack. The harvest will perhaps influence events. Last year it was nothing. Vegetation is so behindhand that at this moment there is not a blade of grass."—June 8th, Polotzk. There had been three years of bad harvests.

wards, "The Emperor was so strong on his ground, his reasoning had so much force and logic, that I could only take refuge in commonplace Court phrases." He had orders to observe the state of the Russian army, and if he could not alarm the Emperor, to work upon the fears of its chiefs; but Nesselrode and Kotchoubey paid him farewell visits, showing that he was intended to leave. The Emperor sent him a present, and he returned to Dresden, May 28th.

Alexander expected to the last a formal declaration of war, and none of his councillors would correct him.* The French ambassador had not yet asked for his passports, and everything looked as if Napoleon would rest his army that year in Poland, and make observations before attacking Russia, when a Cossack officer arrived at Zakret to announce that the whole French army had crossed the Niemen and driven a few troopers out of Kovno, where they were only fifty English miles distant. It was late in the evening of June 25th, and the Emperor was giving a ball to the Poles. Attired in the light blue uniform of the Simonovski Guards he acted as host, and as the ladies afterwards agreed was as superior to his rival in the ball-room as Napoleon in the field. He only danced the march called a Polonaise, excusing himself for not trying a Mazurka, as he had left off dancing for several years, though later in London and Vienna he resumed it. The supper-tables were spread in the garden. The Emperor did not sit down, but walked from one to the other, talking to the guests with an appearance of gaiety. Directly afterwards he set off for Vilna without making the disquieting news public. The Poles dispersed, only dreaming of a garden fête which they in their turn meant to offer to the Emperor.

Alexander went straight to Constantine's quarters at the Hôtel du Pac, in Vilna, and before calling a council wrote a letter to his old tutor, Count Soltikof, the President of the Imperial Council; another to Napoleon; and an address to the army, published the next day. He told Soltikof the French army had passed the frontier, although he had as yet received no answer to his moderate proposals, which proved the falseness of the lately renewed pacific protests. He had full confidence in the zeal of his people and the bravery of his

* De Maistre.

troops; and as the national honour forced him to draw the sword, he would not sheathe it again while a single enemy remained in Russia. His letter to Napoleon was what one gentleman might write to another in a dispute, announcing that unless the offender apologized all further intercourse must cease for ever. Kurakin's note and demand for his passports having crossed Napoleon's professions of friendship, Alexander thought he might have acted hastily, and that his adversary would allege he had thereby provoked the war. He offered once more to open a negotiation if the French re-passed the frontier, and warned Napoleon that otherwise the war might be interminable; for unless he availed himself of this last opportunity, having entered Russia without a pretext, she would not proffer or listen to a single word of peace so long as there remained an armed Frenchman in her empire. He wrote this letter at 2 A.M., June 26th, and sent Balachof with it to Kovno. It was a straightforward, courteous proceeding which Napoleon could not comprehend. If Alexander was prepared for war, it must be a snare; otherwise it was a proof of weakness.

The Russian was received by Napoleon, who asked what his Emperor "was doing at the head of his armies? Why does he not remain in his capital to govern his States?" As for me, it is different. It is my trade. He is making a war which displeases everybody, even his friends the English, and his troops." "As to that," answered Balachof, "the Russians make war with all their hearts, and only ask to come to blows with you." Napoleon then began to abuse Alexander, "making use," reported Balachof, "of some slanderous expressions about the death of his late Majesty." He inquired the number of churches in Moscow, and then said, "How! so many churches when there are no longer Christians?" "Pardon me, Sire," replied Balachof, "the Russians and Spaniards are Christians still." He asked if Alexander meant to resist him. He was only a parade-general, who was there to counsel him? He had but three generals: Kutuzov he did not like, and Napoleon did not care for because he was a Russian; Benningsen, superannuated six years ago, and now in

* "I believe," writes De Maistre, "that he is right; but if anything could make me doubt of it, it would be his assertion."

his second childhood ; and Barclay, only good for retreats. The peace of Bucharest was impossible, but he equally despised both Swedes and Turks. Balachof was dismissed with verbal and absurd proposals, to which Alexander did not reply. "We had not understood," says Ségur, "the importance of the step just taken."* It was the last word he chose to address to the invaders.

In the mean time a warm discussion took place in the council chamber at Vilna. The sudden arrival of the French army found the divisions under Barclay's command scattered over 600 miles, to be less burdensome to the various districts in this time of scarcity, and to watch the enemy's movements. Bagration had orders, in case of a declaration of war, to assist Platof in making a diversion in the Duchy of Warsaw ; but he was seventy miles from the point at which the French actually crossed, and being menaced by Jerome and Davoust, Benken-dorf was despatched to recall him towards Drissa, to unite with Barclay and engage the enemy. Barclay held it would be madness to risk a battle with his one division at Vilna, and besought Alexander, it is said on his knees, not to gratify Napoleon by accepting it, and preparation was made to retire to Svenziany, about fifty miles on the road to Drissa (nearly halfway), and twenty-five from Wilkomir. The entrenched camp at Drissa, intended to contain 100,000 men, had been in course of construction on a sandy plain for nearly a year, but was still far from complete. Paulucci, who had inspected it, took Barclay aside and told him he could not assist in such a fatal plan as making a standpoint at Drissa. There would be a repetition of Ulm. Barclay would say nothing, and Volkonski and Michaud strongly approved of the camp. Paulucci then spoke loudly against it, and told Alexander an asylum or a gibbet ought to be the reward of whoever recommended it. The army was not the place for the Emperor, he should go to revive the spirits of his people. Alexander dismissed him with a present for his services in Georgia, and assembled the

* Ségur places Balachof's mission much later than it really took place, which quite alters its character. But Ségur's inaccuracies occur in every chapter of his book. The day he crossed the Niemen he represents Napoleon dashing alone into the forest. He had a strong guard, and the previous day (not night) reconnoitred the river in disguise. He tells us Napoleon was short-sighted, whereas he had very good sight.

generals to inquire what they thought of this opinion of Drissa. All answered, "He is right, Sire." Alexander asked why they did not tell him sooner. "Sire," they replied, "we dare not." Then one of them, encouraged by the question, added, "Sire, your presence alone paralyses 50,000 men, for as many are required to protect you!" Hearing this he relinquished the command, and marched the same day with the Guards for Svenziany. Two regiments refused to retire till he personally addressed them, believing that both he and they were betrayed by the foreign officers.

General Cathcart accompanied the Russian army through Germany in 1813, and saw some service in Russia in 1812, where he ultimately found a soldier's grave at Inkerman. He says that Alexander,* "as his subsequent military career fully proves," was the most fitted of all the Russian generals to lead the army in 1812, and Thiers admits that he had more ability than his councillors. But his defeat at Austerlitz weighed upon him, and deprived him of the audacity or self-esteem to oppose his own merits to those who superstitiously believed him doomed to be unfortunate in war. He could be obstinate as to Romanzov, and refuse to dismiss him when the whole nation accused him of being a traitor, but not as regarded himself. Moreau said of him, that "an excess of modesty" or natural diffidence was too apt to hide his real talents from ordinary observers, and no man ever acted with more self-sacrifice when he tore himself away from the scene of action and took a painful leave of the troops. As affairs turned out he was indispensable at St. Petersburg, to effect some political combinations and frustrate the peace party, headed by his own family. He remained six days at Svenziany, where he

* "I admire the Emperor," writes De Maistre, "who has the strength to sacrifice his dearest inclinations to the service of the State. He mistrusts others; he also mistrusts himself. He needs a true friend, who would support him, love him, and even console him, for he has often need of it." . . . "What would I not give," he writes again, "to be called to console the Emperor, if I had the means? He is worthy of admiration, for the effort he has made over himself in obeying public opinion; but happy the man who convinces him that the talents of the sovereign who employs men, and puts them in their places, is sufficient by itself." The Count thinks, while the excitement is so great, the Emperor is more wanted at St. Petersburg, but when subsided he would be well placed at the head of his army, to prevent excesses and negotiate peace.

was joined by Barclay and the army from Wilkomir.* Nesselrode accompanied him, but Romanzov went to Polotzk, and Stein and the other civil functionaries to St. Petersburg. If Napoleon had merely wished to crush the Russian army, and not more anxious to capture Alexander, he might have surprised the camp at Wilkomir with greater ease than the Guards at Vilna. From Svenziany Alexander marched to Drissa, where he published a second address to his army, July 9th, to acquaint them with the change of plan, and sent an order through the empire for another levy of recruits. Till the 17th he kept up hopes of Bagration's appearance; for he thought that after announcing a speedy battle to his army, he should be disgraced for ever if he quitted it in the face of the enemy without remaining to share in even its first dangers and success.† But Bagration and Platof were fighting their way between Jerome and Davoust, and only joined Barclay's army at Smolensko. Napoleon was so angry with Jerome for sustaining two repulses and letting Bagration pass, that he sent him back to Westphalia without his guard. Spoiled by the luxuries of the Imperial Court, this Prince compelled several ladies of noble birth to serve him at table at Warsaw, and levied there 500 crowns a day while he stayed for his own personal expenses. When the Abbé Pradt, sent by Napoleon, arrived at the palace of the Bishop of Cujavie, the prelate's secretary, a canon and prior of Malta, was still marked with the blows inflicted on his face by General Count Vandamme, because he could obtain no Tokay, Jerome having carried off all the Bishop's store. Such an example being set by the superior officers in a friendly country, it was naturally followed by the soldiery, and before the French army arrived in Lithuania it left a part of East Prussia a desert, and indiscriminate and wanton pillage was fast alienating the Polish civilians, who fled for the preservation of not only their

* Clausewitz, a Prussian attached to the army, says there were only 170,000 trained soldiers in the empire. The rest were recruits.

† "I know," writes De Maistre, "from certain proofs, that it is a great grief to him. The first of all talents is to reign! When the storm is passed then let the Emperor fight in person if he chooses: the good and evil will be balanced. He will carry there humanity, moderation, chivalry, and will make no war without mercy." It seems to have been feared these qualities might preponderate too much if Alexander undertook to repel a savage invasion.

goods, but of their wives and children. One-fifth only of the invaders were Frenchmen, the rest were Portuguese, Spaniards, Danes, and almost every other European nation, who, finding themselves amid customs and a people totally strange to them, carried on a war of extermination. The French historians excuse their savage conduct, in which all authorities agree, on the ground of their destitution, for they began by robbing their own commissariat, and disorders quickly ensued. This was the result of the rapidity of the march, which enabled Napoleon to surprise the Russians at the cost of starving his own men. Between Kovno and Vilna they left nothing but ruins and pillaged baggage and provision waggons scattered about the fields. The horses were already dying from being fed on unripe rye, and some soldiers of the Young Guard had perished of hunger.* On hearing of this Napoleon calmly observed, "such miseries were inseparable from war; he only required a single victory; if sufficient means remained for that he should be satisfied."

The capture of Alexander was to supply everything:† the Russians would run eagerly with provisions and horses to procure the good treatment of their beloved sovereign, or a defeat such as Friedland would induce the Czar to accept peace. No warm clothing was provided for the French army, though Napoleon knew by experience the cold of a Polish winter, and every book of geography described the barrenness and bad climate of those districts. If Russia were as barbarous as he depicted her, was it likely she could furnish 600,000 men, with all required for a long campaign? She possessed no vineyards between the Niemen and Moscow, and he often said that in winter wine was indispensable to success in war. The wings of his army were daily harassed by the Russian flying squadrons, and prevented from spreading themselves out in search of plunder; yet, like the Scythians before Darius, the Russian main force disappeared like a mirage as he plunged deeper into the country to find it. There were stores of provisions in Dantzic, and in time these arrived,

* Report of the Duc de Trévise. Ségur lays the blame on the wet weather, but Labaume, who wrote in 1816, says it was beautiful, only too hot, all the way to Moscow, with the exception of a storm or two at Smolensko.

† Abbé Pradt.

though not before many thousands of horses had died, and famine was raging in the infantry ranks.

Alexander rejected the idea of laying Vilna waste, and Boutourlin denies that he ever entertained for a moment the same plan proposed by Knesebeck, Stein, and other Germans, to be applied along the whole route to Moscow. The Russian generals destroyed government stores and bridges when it was advisable, but private property was destroyed only by the French or its owners, for even the peasants preferred to join the Russian army without uniform and armed with a hatchet, rather than stay to be beaten or shot by the enemy. Two Polish regiments, forming the vanguard of Napoleon's army, first entered Vilna, and were warmly received by their countrymen, but throughout the war they conducted themselves with the utmost ferocity whenever they came in contact with the Russians, either in the villages or in battle. The stores and magazines in Vilna had been carried off with the retreating army, and Napoleon finding nothing left, established a regular military government, partly composed of Poles, under Maret, to levy recruits and money throughout Lithuania, where even the Russians had imposed lighter taxes than in the heart of the empire. Her feeling for the Polish portion of the enemy was too strong to enable Alexander to make a stand on the Beresina, but all he had spared was forcibly seized by the French, and nothing could exceed her misery during the next six months. As early as July 9th, Napoleon,* through Berthier, rebuked Poniatowski for complaining of want of supplies and pay. He said, "instead of talking of provisions his whole object should be to pursue the enemy. The Imperial Guard had come by forced marches from Paris, and was totally without bread, and only fed on meat, and he saw with regret that the Poles were such *bad* soldiers and had such a *bad* spirit." To Macdonald he also wrote, July 11th, that he was in error if he supposed 3000 horses were to be *purchased* in Samogitia. They were to "be got by requisition, and their price deducted from the contribution to be imposed on the country." His answer to the Diet of Warsaw, assembled under the elder Prince Czartoriski, who sent a deputation to Vilna, saying they had voted the re-establishment of Poland,

* Letter to Berthier. See Wilson's Russian Campaign.

and hoped he would proclaim its existence, was equally chilling to the people who had hailed him as their ally. "If I had been a Pole I should have thought and voted like you. I authorize the efforts you wish to make. I will do all that depends on me to second your resolutions; but in countries so distant it is in the unanimous efforts of the population which inhabits them that you can hope for success . . . I have guaranteed to the Emperor of Austria the integrity of his dominions. I cannot sanction any movement tending to trouble the quiet possession of what remains to him of the Polish provinces. Act so that Lithuania, Samogitia, Vitepsk, Ukraine, may be animated by the spirit I saw in great Poland, and Providence will crown your good cause with success," &c.

The bridges in Vilna were still burning after the Russian retreat when Napoleon entered it a few hours later on, June 28th. He seated himself on a beam, and called for a glass of Polish beer while giving orders for the most important to be rebuilt. He tried to counteract the impression Alexander had made, but his followers seemed equally bent on destroying his popularity. Murat complained he could get nothing fit to eat, and that he must find some fur pelisses to send to his wife, who wished for them from the first town in Russia. A Pole told him Vilna was in Poland, not Russia, but he took them without payment nevertheless. His soldiers robbed the churches of the sacred vessels, and even the cemeteries were rifled for the sake of the ornaments buried with the dead. Napoleon attended a State mass, because it was the custom among legitimate kings, and desired the Polish ladies to be presented to him. He asked one if she was married or divorced, and hearing she was neither, advised her "to find a husband, as she had no time to lose." To another, who wore the decoration of a Russian maid of honour, he observed, "Alexander is very amiable; he has gained you all here; but are you good Poles?" He said to the Rector of the Academy of Vilna, "You are all Papists. Does the Czar protect you?" The Rector spoke of Alexander's munificent protection of every establishment for science, art, or benevolence. "Yes, he is a good Prince," said Napoleon; "a philosopher on the throne." He questioned a Polish noble about Russia, and if the Senate had much power there. "Does

the Czar really mean to command his own armies? I desired to avoid bloodshed. He constrains me to it. You are astonished by my brilliant suite? Display is necessary to the French. I say so to my father-in-law. Simplicity does not suit a parvenu as it does an hereditary sovereign. Would you believe, I was obliged in conversation with Alexander to sustain against him the question of the hereditary right to a throne. It is better than the uncertain chances of election; Poland proves it.”*

Napoleon left Vilna, July 17th, for the camp at Drissa, which Barclay occupied till the 18th. The French reports that large supplies were found there is contradicted by their destitution, and also by the Russians, who say they carefully conveyed everything away. Alexander joined in repulsing the French vanguard under Sebastiani, which served to animate the Russian army before it left Drissa for Polotzk; and Wittgenstein's division was detached to protect the road to St. Petersburg. Baron Korff also gained an advantage over Montbrun, and these two defeats vexed Napoleon, and confirmed him in his decision to move forward in the hope of a decisive engagement. At Drissa, where the distance is nearly equal to St. Petersburg and Moscow, he hesitated as to which of the two capitals he should attempt with the main army. The wish to see a city so celebrated as Moscow, and to sign a peace in her Oriental palace, decided him, and he deputed to his left wing the task of marching on the northern city.

Alexander sent forward two addresses to St. Petersburg and Moscow, dated July 18th, from the camp at Polotzk, in which he told them of the invasion, and asked their aid. “Nobles, you have been in all ages the defenders of your country. Holy Synod, and members of our Church, you have called down upon our empire the Divine protection. Russian people, intrepid posterity of Slavonians, it is not the first time you have plucked out the teeth of the lion who sprang on you, and met his own destruction! Unite yourselves; carry the Cross in your hearts and the sword in your hands, and human force can never prevail against you!” &c. He intrusted the land-owners of every province with the organization of the militia at certain points, the officers being chosen from them, and never

* *Souvenirs d'Alexandre et de Napoléon 1^{er}.* Mme. Choiseul Gouffier.

was a sovereign's appeal more nobly answered. All contributions were voluntary, and the provincial assemblies fitted out whole regiments at their own expense. In Livonia, though opposed by the German division of the Grand Army, the same patriotic spirit was displayed. No income or property tax was levied there, as it had suffered so much from the blockade, but herds of cattle were now driven off towards the Russian army by the nobles; peasants offered themselves as soldiers, the ladies prepared lint and warm clothing, and every district came forward in the same manner according to its means. In the old Muscovite provinces men of fifty and sixty begged to be taken as recruits, and in some villages even women in disguise joined the ranks.

Alexander left Polotzk on the night of the 18th for Veliki Luki, a little town to the north of the direct road to Moscow, but selected as one of the dépôts, and there he met Zea Bermudez, an envoy from the Spanish Cortes,* who signed a treaty with Romanzov on the 20th, though a Spanish force was actually enrolled in Napoleon's army. He left Veliki Luki on the day of his arrival for Smolensko, where he held a review of 20,000 of the new militia, and rode round the outskirts of the city. "What a beautiful town," he said to Volkonski, "what a picturesque site!" He ordered that it should sustain a defence to protect Moscow, but it was by no means suited for a military post in modern times, though in ancient days it stood more than one celebrated siege. Romanzov left him at Veliki Luki for St. Petersburg, but Count Tolstoi, Aratchaief, Balachof, and Shishkov preceded him to Moscow, where he arrived nearly at midnight, July 23rd, having travelled like a courier 280 miles from Smolensko, and more than 500 since he left Drissa.† He was accustomed for the sake of speed to use a very different vehicle from that in which Napoleon at this moment was making his way through Russia. It was the lightest of open carriages, drawn by four horses abreast, and followed

* The Regent of Spain, the Duc de l'Infantado, in an address to the Cortes, September 1st, 1812, dwelt on the similarity of the Russians to the Spaniards by constitution and religion, and on Alexander's liberal sentiments, his people's love for him, and his virtues, which obliged even Napoleon, in their interviews and correspondence, to profess to entertain the same views.

† De Maistre writes in 1806, that he is only astonished the Emperor has never been killed; and again, in 1811, to the same effect.

by a single mounted Cossack. A tourist describes the mode in which he saw him start from a post-house. The swiftest, and consequently least trained, steeds were brought for his use and held firmly till harnessed to the carriage, when without a movement of the whip or reins they dashed off as if rushing towards their native steppes. He used to travel day and night, for before the invention of railways time would not otherwise have enabled him to accomplish his numerous journeys; and if he wished to visit several places on his way, he arranged to reach them during the day, and drove on again when the working hours were past. The sleep he could procure in his uncomfortable conveyance as he was hurrying along seemed sufficient, and he was equally independent of provisions, a piece of bread or some biscuits,* and a bottle of water, being all he took with him on his route.†

Alexander stayed in Moscow from the night of the 24th to the 30th, "and excited her," writes De Maistre, "to an enthusiasm such as the finest moments of the republics present few parallels." He was met at the Smolensko gate of the city by the Metropolitan and a procession of clergy. On the morning of the 27th he attended a special service at the cathedral,‡ and thence repaired to the Hall of Nobles, which was densely crowded, where he thanked them for their aid, and in a warm address§ pointed out the peril of the country, and its hope of ultimate success. "I have neglected nothing," he said, "to assure the peace of this empire, and I own we have only taken up arms at the

* Count Tolstoi said he was half-starved when he travelled with the Emperor, who ate a morsel of chicken and a piece of bread, and called that "dining."

† Napoleon's travelling carriage was a large easy vehicle, divided into two compartments, to serve as a sleeping-room at night and a study during the day. A large lamp, let in from behind, enabled him to read with comfort; and a number of cushions, hid during the day, became a bed at night, on which he could lie at full length. From the date of his accession it was his custom to follow his columns at march in this vehicle, which he called "making war like an Emperor;" and when compelled, during the retreat from Russia, to mount a horse, he called it making war again like General Bonaparte.

‡ "I heard from an eye-witness," writes Madame Junot, "how the image of St. Sergius was presented to the young Czar, whose handsome face, surrounded by the old banners in the dimly-lighted church, had a most picturesque effect."

§ "All was great," writes Ségur; "the circumstances, the speaker, the assembly, and the resolutions he inspired."

last extremity, when placed between the infamy of allowing her laurels to fade or accepting war. Formerly the north was the terror of the south, but now the north civilizes herself and aspires to a universal peace ; while the south, blinded by a senseless fury, abandons her rich provinces to ravage our country, and my peaceful sentiments have become the misfortune of my reign. The enemy tries to deceive those who are ignorant of our manners and principles by calling it a political war, the struggle of civilization against barbarism ; whereas, what can civilization fear from us who exhaust our treasures and cross the entire globe to cultivate it and naturalize it in our climate ? No, this is not his motive. He fears our progress more than our rudeness. What nation is not envious of the wonderful protection God has granted to Russia, and of the nations we have conquered, the provinces we have subdued ? though let us rather remember the towns we have founded, the districts we have wisely regulated, and the learned institutions we have created, which in less than 100 years have effaced the line separating civilized from barbarous Europe. It is our civilization which now draws on us the French hatred : they reproach us with our conquests over the Turks and Persians, when it is only due to the terror we inspire in the Mahometans that they have ceased to invade Europe. To us Hungary owes her safety, and Italy her preservation, while the conquests of her enemies cause new wars and incessant discord," &c. He ended by explaining the state of military affairs, and said he regarded the zeal of the nobility as the firmest support of the throne. In all times and on all occasions it had proved the faithful defender of the integrity and glory of Russia. His voice shook with emotion as he stopped amidst one cry from all present, "Ask what you please, Sire, we offer you everything." One of the nobles proposed a levy of militia and the gift of one peasant in twenty-five, but he was interrupted by others, who said it was not enough ; the country required a greater sacrifice, the grant of one serf in ten, ready armed, equipped, and provided for three months. From the Assembly of Nobles Alexander went to the Hall of Merchants, and spoke to them more briefly, but Rostopchine read aloud his address to the city of Moscow. It strongly excited the hearers, and their chief, whom they elect themselves, set the example of munifi-

cence by putting down his name for 50,000 roubles. It was two-thirds of his fortune, and he paid it the next day. The gifts of all kinds were so generous, that the Emperor limited the amount in a decree of July 30th, and lest he should completely impoverish the city only accepted what was absolutely required.

"The nobles literally gave him Russia," writes De Maistre to the King of Sardinia: "they melted into tears; in short, Sire, there was never anything like it. The merchants have given ten million roubles and lent him fifty to sixty millions. The Countess Orlof, daughter of the famous Alexis, and still unmarried, nearly as much, and a distinguished gift is from Count Momonof, son of the most loved and most celebrated of Catherine's favourites; he has given 800,000 roubles in silver (2,400,000 of paper), and all his diamonds, worth 300,000. How all these riches have remounted to their source!"

Alexander allowed Rostopchine full powers to use any necessary means of defence in case of the approach of the enemy, especially as to the foreign residents, whom during former wars he had refused to order out of the country, saying it was the duty of the police to watch them. He did not wish to try harsher measures now, unless they were proved to be spies. On taking leave of the governor in his study, he embraced him in presence of Aratchaief and Balachof; Aratchaief afterwards congratulated Rostopchine on receiving the highest mark of Imperial favour, "for," he said, "I who have served him since he has reigned have never been embraced by him." Balachof told Rostopchine that the jealous Aratchaief would never forgive this embrace. "I laughed then," he writes, "but I have since found that the Minister of Police spoke the truth. He knew Aratchaief better than I did."

Alexander stayed for three hours at Tver to see his sister, who had raised a regiment on her own estate. At Novgorod he met Paulucci, and took him to St. Petersburg, where he arrived August 3rd. "I forgive you," he said, "for having exposed me to a sedition. I see now how much I was deceived,"* and he offered him the post of Quarter-Master

* "If this prince," says De Maistre, "has equals on these points, he has no superior. His patience, his philosophy, his desire of knowing the truth, his disposition to pardon everything, even what has personally

General. Paulucci declined it, for his foreignⁿ origin would procure him a bad reception with the army in its present frame of mind ; " every fault would be thrown upon him ; he should be called a drunkard or even a traitor."* At St. Petersburg Alexander heard that Lord Cathcart, the new English ambassador, was coming through Stockholm to Russia. He had abstained from any negotiation with England till Napoleon entered his empire, but the peace of Orebro was signed in Sweden, July 29th, by Mr. Thornton and Baron Nicolai, when he pressed for a speedy conclusion to enable him to open his ports before the winter. The English Government was a fortnight settling the preliminaries, and so strongly represented that Russia could expect no assistance, but was engaged in a very hazardous war, that Alexander felt some disappointment. Stein and the other foreign agents and exiles had led him to believe that such an opportunity as this war was only required for the Continent to rise *en masse* against the oppressor ; but, on the contrary, jealousies intervened, and although he had fought so gallantly for other nations, and this was the first time his own territories were threatened, they now all joined against him, bribed by the hope of sharing in the spoil. However, the English treaty helped to secure Sweden's neutrality. General Sutchelen crossed the floating ice of the Baltic in a two-oared boat from Aland, to bring the King of Sweden's favourable answer in March, but since then the Crown Prince had made a secret offer to Napoleon. The uncertainty obliged Alexander to keep 20,000 men in Finland till England added her guarantee to secure Norway to Sweden, and a subsidy of a million sterling if Bernadotte would land a detachment in Germany. He never did it while Napoleon was in Russia, and in 1813 was of more harm than good to the Allies,† but his mere neutrality was important in 1812. Alexander sailed for Abo, August 23rd, attended by Romanzov, Aratchaief, and

affected him, is beyond all praise. What can be said for the mutes who let him march to Drissa without daring to speak ? Such a tyrant deserves to be loved for himself."

* Paulucci replaced Essen as Governor of Riga. Barclay de Tolly called on him, and said, "The Emperor has appointed you. Do not believe that Livonia is Georgia. I am a Livonian ; and if you harm this fair province, I shall recommend your removal." Paulucci was very popular, but resigned in 1823 to return to Italy.

† Wellington Correspondence, 1813-14. Muffling's Memoirs.

Czernichef, and was met the next day by Lord Cathcart with Bernadotte, whom he entertained magnificently, and who was flattered by being received on equal terms for the first time by a foreign sovereign. He did once advise Alexander to restore Finland to Sweden, but the Czar told him the Russians would not allow him to give it up. He felt more secure in forming an alliance with Russia when told the war should not end till Napoleon was deposed. Then to whom, asked Bernadotte, would he give the throne? and when Alexander replied to whoever was most fitted for it, Bernadotte is said to have been vain enough to suppose that the Czar might mean him. The treaty was signed on the 28th, and two days later he left for Stockholm with the Grand Cordon of St. Andrew; while Alexander returned to St. Petersburg secure of the fidelity of Finland, and able to send its garrison to join Wittgenstein on the Duna.

Lauriston received his passports in August, and left St. Petersburg to join the French army, but the Austrian envoy remained and was well treated. There was certainly grandeur in the statesmanship that could rise above all feeling of present revenge in view of a distant object which it always kept in sight. Alexander was resolved some day to gain Austria as an ally in the resettlement of Europe, and lost no opportunity of treating her with moderation. The flags worked by the late Empress Maria Theresa were captured in a battle gained over the Austrians in the Ukraine, and they were all returned to Vienna. Schwartzberg, in addressing his troops, said they were going to fight not merely for France, but for their own Emperor and against Russia, and he spoke of "the perfidy of the Czar," but this expression was not approved by the Court of Vienna. His division of 30,000 men crossed the Bog, July 1st, and captured some magazines at Pinsk, containing corn worth 100,000*l.*, and a park of powder waggons. Tormassof, with a mixed army of regulars, Cossacks, and Kalmucks, defeated the Austrians and Saxons united in more than one obstinate engagement, and kept them from carrying out their orders and joining Davoust till the approach of winter and the advance of Tchichagof from the Danube compelled them to retreat. At the battle of Kobrin, August 12th, they lost 5000 in killed and wounded and 300 prisoners, and the Russians

nearly 4000 killed and wounded ; but in the rich corn districts of south-west Russia they found ample provisions, so that they suffered much less than any other of Napoleon's allies.

As soon as Alexander returned from Moscow, August 3rd, he regulated the recruiting over districts where it would be least felt, to avoid famine another year, and tried to relieve his financial difficulties by increasing the capitation tax, and extending it to the Mussulmans of the Crimea. He abolished an income and property tax devised by Speranski, which was particularly disliked ; the taxes on the mines of private persons were doubled, but the voluntary contributions reduced, for in their patriotic zeal the nobles would have ruined themselves for years.* The Holy Synod caused an address to be read in all the churches, pointing out that infidelity had been the source of the misfortunes and crimes of France, "of which the Church and Empire of Russia, preserved as witnesses to the truth by Divine mercy, had long been compassionate spectators." It permitted the sons of the clergy not yet admitted to the priesthood to take up arms, and they came forward in crowds—an unprecedented event. It also called upon the soldiers "to remember mercy even to the enemy, lest they should bring down on themselves the wrath of the Most High." Muskets fell short, and many of the militia were armed with pikes and hatchets, dressed in the national costume. On the top of their caps was a brazen cross surmounting an Imperial crown and the letter A. When the aristocracy came forward so nobly towards Russia's defence, it was natural they should claim some voice in the selection of a commander-in-chief, and Alexander recognized their right to choose the general who, as he said, should "vindicate the arms of Russia, and defend their remaining possessions." The general outcry was for Kutuzov. "It is certain," writes De Maistre, "that the Emperor does not particularly like him, either for his notorious attachment to a Moldavian in the pay of the Porte, or for other reasons : perhaps his too easy complaisance, for this would be just like the Emperor. Once, speaking of a minister, he said disdainfully, 'That man has never differed from me.'

* In the St. Petersburg Gazette it was announced that Count Soltikof gave a regiment of hussars ; Momonof, the Procureur of the Senate, a regiment of Cossacks ; Prince Gagarine, an infantry regiment, &c.

He created Kutuzov a Prince of the Empire, but opinion went to such lengths that he gave him the command, to universal satisfaction." Yet before deciding upon it, Alexander consulted six dignitaries, and on their entire approval he sent for the general, and told him, "in case of the war turning out happily for Russia, to re-occupy the western governments (Lithuania, &c.), and to treat the inhabitants with clemency, though they had failed in their duty to Russia." When the Emperor gave him a marshal's baton with the chief command, and said, "Your Sovereign and your country decree this honour to you," Kutuzov blushed like a young girl. The appointment was dated August 20th, and, after prostrating himself before the altar in the Kazan Church, he set out the same day for the army, where he arrived on the 29th.*

Alexander's plan was to harass the two wings of Napoleon's army, and waste the main body in partial combats, drawing it gradually into the interior, till before Smolensko the Russians, joined by Wittgenstein and Tormassof, might in one great battle complete its overthrow, weakened as it would be through want of supplies. But Barclay had been frequently and severely wounded, and seems to have lost nerve. He had been distinguished in the Finland campaign, and was careful of the health and lives of his men, a quality Alexander appreciated; but the system he learned under Suvorov, with armies of only 10,000 to 15,000, was very different from that required when in command of 80,000, and opposed to half a million. He was the descendant of a Scotch family migrated to Livonia before the reign of Peter the Great. The son of a Lutheran minister, he was born in 1755, entering the Russian army at the age of

* Kutuzov was almost blind, corpulent, and unwieldy. Cathcart, in his "Campaigns of 1812-13," says he had "painful disorders which made riding impossible." He was now seventy-four, and had begun to avoid society, not being equal to it. He preserved a predilection for the French since his sojourn in Paris, and was not personally disinclined, says Wilson, "to Napoleon," whom he considered as a wholesome check on "British arrogance." "He is excellent," writes De Maistre, "if the Emperor is not with the army, for otherwise he is a mere courtier, and loses all his capabilities. This sort of character is very dangerous in Russia, where the prince has a moral effect (see also Madame de Staël) quite different to that in other countries. Here respect for authority is dumb, it is its old character, not yet nearly effaced. If the Emperor took a fancy to burn St. Petersburg, no one would tell him it was inconvenient. They might kill the sovereign, but must not speak to him. You may judge the effect such a character produces in war," &c.

twelve, and rose entirely by his own merits and long military services. In England he would not have been considered a foreigner any more than the Duke of Portland, whose family left Holland about the same time; but the Russians called the natives of all those provinces not belonging to Russia proper, Nemetzi—that is, Germans or foreigners, and Barclay was proportionately disliked. Finding his retreat impeded by the private carriages belonging to the young military nobility, and their large amount of baggage, he sent every courtier from the army, among others two of Alexander's Polish aides-de-camp, the Princes Czertwinski and Lubomirski, whom he detected or suspected of corresponding with the enemy. When the prisoners captured were found to be natives of every country on the Continent, and Poland was gradually given up to the enemy, the Russians thought there was some plot, and that the foreigners in their own army were not engaged heart and soul against their compatriots in the French service. Napoleon gave out that for every Frenchman killed in his army the Russians shot down four "cochons," meaning his foreign soldiers, and the Russians imagined they were purposely spared. Was it not Count Lieven, a Livonian; Phull, a Prussian; Armfeldt, once a Swede; Barclay, and others of foreign origin,* who recommended this system of retreat? They cared nothing for Russia in ruins, but were only serving their own people; and the outcry was so alarming that Barclay wrote to Alexander from Smolensko, advising him to place a native Russian in the supreme command.

When Napoleon crossed the Niemen at Kovno, Macdonald with a mixed army of French and Prussians passed it at Tilsit, and received orders to take Riga, and then join Oudinot in an advance on St. Petersburg, intended to become the capital of a French marshal, and to be detached for ever from the government of Moscow. The Russians under Essen were driven from their advanced outposts into Riga, and burned the rich suburbs of the city containing the houses of the German merchants; but they maintained their ground against all future attacks, and Wittgenstein defeated the Prussians under Kleist, July 18th, inflicting a loss of 1500. As the safety of

* "No nation hates foreigners, or anything imported by them, so much as the Russian," says De Maistre.

St. Petersburg "required him to defeat Oudinot wherever he could be reached," he drove him across the Dryssa at Jacabovo, July 30th, after a three days' battle, and prevented his junction with the Prussians and Macdonald. Napoleon was obliged to send reinforcements from the main army, but on August 18th Wittgenstein defeated Oudinot under the walls of Polotzk, and also St. Cyr in a twelve hours' battle on the 29th, when fifteen guns were captured and 3000 prisoners, including two colonels. These victories stopped the French march to St. Petersburg, which had been greatly alarmed, and the Russians seized the merchandize the French had intended to sell there* in revenge for Alexander's ukaz a year and a half before, when he imposed heavy duties on French goods. Alexander rewarded Wittgenstein with the Cross of St. George of the second class, and a pension of 12,000 roubles.

Napoleon heard of Sebastiani's defeat on the Duna before he left Vilna, and recalled his troops sent by a cross road to Vitepsk, in the hope of a general engagement at Drissa. It was said if they had pursued their march they might have intercepted Alexander, who travelled without a military escort; but the movement enabled Barclay to proceed unopposed to Vitepsk. Between Vitepsk and Smolensko his troops engaged the vanguard of the enemy with success, and repulsed Murat at Valoutina, in an engagement "upon which that general," says Ségur, "was afterwards silent." This made the Russians still more anxious to attack, while Napoleon also wished it, hoping to destroy them before they could unite with their flanks. In a bulletin from Vilna he describes Russia, "so formidable at a distance as a desert, for which its scattered population is wholly insufficient. They are scarcely possessed of arms. Alexander will require more time to collect his recruits than we shall to march to Moscow."

The plan Napoleon pursued in this campaign was the same by which he gained previous victories. To engage a country in diplomatic negotiations, and talk of his friendship for her till the last moment; to tamper with her officials and the republican portion of her population, and then to overwhelm her suddenly before she was prepared to make the war self-sup-

* This confidence in their success, with which Napoleon inspired his army, was of itself, it has been said, half a victory.

porting by requisitions, and even to enlist her people, and oblige them to serve against their own sovereign ; to bribe the peasants to become spies,* and intimidate the stoutest hearts by the "examples" he made of all actuated by any patriotic spirit. He permitted plunder, because it attached the soldier to his trade by asserting military supremacy, and made him an enemy of the civilians ; but this method now reacted on itself. He had never commanded so large an army, or advanced so far from his centre, and it was simply beyond his control.† It was without wine or brandy, except for the general's use, by the time it reached Vitepsk (July 28th), and the Bavarian corps alone was reduced to less than half before it had crossed the frontier of Old Russia or been engaged with the enemy, the result of bad and insufficient food, the use of stagnant water, and consequent disease. The rest of the army had lost nearly a third from desertion, fever, and irregular warfare ; foraging parties sent off into the woods exasperated the peasantry by their barbarity, and were surrounded and shot down, or killed with hatchets ; and yet the French were still in Lithuania, the country Napoleon pretended he had come to restore. Far from being more desolate and primitive, the French owned these provinces were more fertile and contained larger towns and better roads than they were led to expect. The high road between Moscow and Smolensko was as good as any in Europe, and Napoleon used to cite good roads as a proof of a country's civilization ; but he expected to find citizens like those of Italy and Germany, who opened their gates to the conquerors, believing them to be brother republicans, and to save their towns from pillage. In Poland the numerous Jews acted as spies, but in Russia itself they could not find even a Jew. The Russian soldiers from Eylau and Friedland had reported in their native villages the state in which those Prussian districts were left by the French

* Napoleon's campaigns in Italy and Germany were aided by the lowest of the population, who acted as spies.

† The Russians had often made war 1000 miles from their seat of government, but when they conquered Astrakhan and the Crimea they carried their provisions, and even water, with them across the steppes in Southern Russia. De Maistre writes, "the French desert by fifties to Wittgenstein's camp, complaining above all of the want of shoes, a point particularly cared for in the Russian armies—and this in August."

plunderers, and filled the peasants with a horror of them, increased by the delight the invaders seemed to take in despoiling the Russian churches and the village graves. Indeed, its own officers admitted that in Russia the French army became little better than wild beasts.

Even if Napoleon disapproved of this conduct, constantly pointed out to him, he was unable to stop it. A certain want of discipline in a comparatively civilized and educated army of 50,000 men might not occasion its disorganization, though it would still be a terror to the quiet residents in an invaded district; but it was different in an army of 500,000 mixed soldiers, many of them ignorant or naturally savage, like the Croats, Bavarians, Spaniards, and Poles, who have always been cruel in war. The result was, that the Grand Army soon became a mere rabble, melting fast as it moved along, and instead of sowing corn, like the Roman and Greek conquerors, as they marched, to supply them on their return, they burned the woods and standing corn, destroying everything they could not carry away. At Vitepsk, the last town in Lithuania, Barclay, on retiring, gave the magistrates leave to open their gates to the French, yet it was sacked as if it had been a storm prize. A French officer describes his soldiers attacking the houses, "regardless of the cries of the women, who on their knees begged for their own lives and those of their children. Some only sought food, but others even robbed these mothers and infants of their clothes."

Here Napoleon paused, and gave out the campaign was over for that year, besides ordering enough ovens to be built to bake 29,000 lbs. of bread. "This is a three years' war," he said to Murat; "1813 will see us at Moscow, 1814 at St. Petersburg." He had just heard of Sebastiani's defeat with the loss of several cannon at Inkovo, but also of the arrival of fresh supplies and recruits at Vilna, and intended to send to France for singers and actresses to enable him to endure a long Russian winter in a dull town like Vitepsk. He had brought from Paris numerous copies of a work published by his orders, called the "Progress of the Russian Power," and gave Maret orders to distribute it in Poland to stir up the people against the Czar. He hoped to spread it on his line of march, as it was intended to alienate the Russians from Eng-

land by quoting largely from Dr. Clarke, and to accuse Alexander, with the connivance of Great Britain, of causing the murder of his father. Many of these books were afterwards found in Maret's house at Vilna, and Alexander was extremely irritated by what he called "an infamous attempt to shake the allegiance of his subjects." At Vitepsk, Napoleon even resorted to the miserable expedient of spreading a report that Alexander had been assassinated because he wished to propose peace, hoping that the peasantry, following out what they were assured was the desire of their murdered sovereign, would ally themselves with the French against their boyards; but there were no Russians left in the neighbourhood to be deceived, and it was not long believed in the French camp. He said he was anxious for peace, but in order to treat for it two people were necessary, and he was only one. Had a single letter reached him from Alexander? Russia was too powerful to yield, except after a great battle; but, if necessary, he would march to Moscow to seek it. "Then if Alexander still persists, I will negotiate with the boyards, or even with the people of that city. It is numerous, united, and therefore enlightened. It will understand its own interests, and the value of liberty. It hates St. Petersburg. I will take advantage of their jealousy, which may have incalculable results."

An expression Napoleon used to his ministers before the war, "Alexander is a child; I will make him weep tears of blood," was repeated in one of his letters intercepted by some Cossacks, and sent to the Czar. "I remember," said Alexander, "one of his remarks at Erfurt. 'In war it is obstinacy that does everything. Through it I have conquered.' I will prove to him that I recollect his lessons."

The fiery Bagration joined Barclay before Smolensko, where they made a partial stand. It occupied a square mile, surrounded by an old-fashioned stone wall thirty feet high, and broad, but rather weakened than otherwise by wooden towers butting from it, not strong enough to receive artillery; a few old perforated cannon being left there as memorials of its importance when it formed the bulwark of Russia. Most of the houses were of wood in the midst of gardens, and it contained many churches with brightly painted domes. It is 513 miles



from St. Petersburg, and 280 from Moscow, and if defensible, Napoleon had resolved to rest there for the winter, and wait to advance on the capital till the spring. His pride was satisfied by having entered Old Russia, and he might spend the time in reorganizing Poland. But the Poles could no longer suppose he meant to reunite even Lithuania to Warsaw. Their Prince Sanguszko was kept idle in the camp, vainly asking for money to enlist a fresh band of Lithuanians in French pay, as he hoped for an early reconciliation with Alexander, and wished to put no obstacle in its way. In vain Constantine and the other Russian generals besought Barclay to engage the whole army in defence of this city, which repulsed Ney's advanced corps before they arrived to its relief. 700 houses had taken fire in the bombardment, and he thought it would only be useless waste of life, as he must evacuate it at last to protect Moscow. They retreated fighting, and inflicting heavy losses on the French, who filled the few buildings left standing in Smolensko with their wounded and sick, though the accommodation was quite insufficient. The Bavarians, Würtembergers, and other foreign troops had been long without bread, and fed exclusively on meat and rye. The deserters increased, in spite of a liberal distribution of orders and rewards. Two French officers were constantly but uselessly employed to work on the peasants, and make them bring provisions, and Napoleon sent for a priest left in Smolensko to assure him that he was a Christian like himself, and it was only a political quarrel with the Czar. Even Murat now counselled rest, and Rapp described the disorganized state of every regiment; but Napoleon said a battle would rally all the stragglers, and the army in its present state was only kept together by motion. If he only wanted glory, he might attain it by retiring and throwing himself upon Wittgenstein or Tormassof, but he wished for peace, and that could only be had at Moscow. He also felt that if he stayed at Smolensko the new Russian recruits would have time to come up, and he might be silently surrounded before the spring. He had promised his soldiers the plunder of Smolensko, but they found nothing left worth taking away. He must pay for the war by seizing on the treasures of St. Petersburg or Moscow, for he again hesitated between the two. In a letter to Barclay, August 28th, Berthier

wrote, "The Emperor directs me to present his compliments to the Emperor Alexander; tell him that neither the vicissitudes of war nor anything else can diminish the friendship he feels for him."

"Napoleon's proclamation that the campaign is over for this year, and that he has conquered Poland, has raised the hopes of the Russians," writes De Maistre. "They count on the junction of Admiral Tchichagof and Tormassof before another spring. The Emperor is quite *high-spirited*. The Russian army supports unheard-of fatigues with cheerfulness; it marched two days and a night, only stopping to feed the horses."

If the English treaty aided Russia with Sweden, it decidedly injured her on the side of Turkey, as the British envoy received his instructions before she signed the peace of Bucharest, and did not arrive till after it at Constantinople, and also from the very different objects of the two empires. Wilson was appointed the English agent on this occasion. He had indirectly done Russia much harm in 1807, but had written an able account of that campaign, showing the falseness of the French bulletins, and sent a copy of his book to Alexander in 1811, though Russia and England were then at war. He left Constantinople, July, 1812, to meet Alexander at Vilna; but first called on the Grand Vizier encamped at Shumla, and on Tchichagof commanding the Russians at Bucharest. The treaty agreed between Russia and Turkey did not provide for the immediate evacuation of Servia, which was to remain under Russian protection; and Tchichagof's scheme, approved by Alexander, was to march on to the French possessions in Dalmatia and the Ionian Isles, and effect a junction with the British fleet to make a descent upon Italy, and call on her to rise against the French during the absence of Murat and his troops in Russia. The Russian fleet in the Black Sea, under Admiral Greig, was to join him at Corfu, and it was with the idea of maritime operations that an admiral had superseded Kutuzov. If Turkey would lend her assistance or conclude the peace deferred through French intrigues, it would be well received; but if not, Tchichagof meant to force a passage into Dalmatia, and raise the Christian population of Bosnia and Servia. An *anxiety* to make peace would have been the worst policy



towards Turkey; but that Russia was willing for it was shown by her agreeing to relinquish Moldavia and Wallachia, for two years incorporated in her empire. A diversion in Italy must have called off some of Napoleon's forces from Russia; and Hungary was known to be dissatisfied with the war. If Italy set her an example, she would certainly declare herself, and the flame once lighted, without the jealousy which in Germany always accompanied its ignition by a Russian army, how many of the battles of 1813-14 might have been spared? But England's fear of a Russian rival on the Mediterranean opposed this project, and pressed as Russia was by other enemies, her hostility would have been fatal to it. Wilson, armed with all the authority of his Government, strongly protested, and induced Tchichagof also to withdraw from Servia, and follow out the alternative in his instructions of joining Tormassof. It was understood the British influence was strong enough to preserve Servia from feeling the effects of his absence in the barbarity of her Suzerain. Wilson affirmed, that the immediate evacuation of Servia and the restoration of Bessarabia to Turkey, both being Christian provinces, would make her a warm and sincere friend to Russia for the future. He ventured to say in a letter to the Czar, that if he gave up the mouth of the Danube, just acquired after five years of warfare, and every other advantage, including the fortresses and a district in Asia, "it would assure him the affection of a prince" (the savage Mahmoud) "endowed with splendid qualities, and the esteem of a brave and high-minded people would be won for ever by such a trait of generous policy." Alexander must have smiled at the writer's idea of his simplicity, as likely to be tempted by such a lure, or that the Turks would view it in any other light than an advantage extorted from weakness. While England was securing colonies in all parts of the world, Alexander was reminded that "the great object of contest was the destruction of Bonaparte's iron sceptre; that all other objects, however legitimate and generally desirable, which may retard the principal success are now of minor and prejudicial character;" and the letter ended with something like a threat as to the rapid improvements in Turkey, which would soon render her truly formidable. Tchichagof might well sneer at British

diplomats, who now urged on Russia a course of policy they never pursued. "Europe would resound," says the letter, "with praises of the magnanimity and disinterestedness of the sacrifice; it would be hailed as evidence of a system that has long been needed, but which no other State in Europe has yet undeviatingly pursued. Your Majesty must not be deceived by the report of your minister, whose opinion I indirectly elicited, that Turkey has neither the intention nor the means to disturb the peace of Bucharest." Yet the writer had heard at the Grand Vizier's camp, that peace was very desirable with Russia from the state of the Turkish army; and the Sultan shortly showed his "splendid qualities" by cutting off the head of the Grand Vizier, and the hands of the two Princes Morusis; the one for his ill-success in the war, the others for having signed the peace. Such a pressure on a sovereign who had carried on what Wilson calls "a splendidly successful war against Turkey," when he was in a most critical position from an unprovoked invasion by England's greatest enemy, was hardly the act of a *friendly* Power; it was also likely to excite false hopes that by making the required concessions she would obtain Turkey's aid. The Emperor was prepared to consider the matter if Turkey seemed likely to help him in return; but though Andrassy arrived the day after Wilson's departure from Constantinople with proposals which Turkey would not accept, as they stipulated that the Sultan should lead his army in person, it was contrary to Turkish traditions to assist a Christian Power, especially Russia, and she almost immediately broke the first article of the treaty in Servia. Russia had constituted herself the protector of the Christian population in Turkey, to obtain for them at least the free exercise of their religion; while England regarded them as slaves with no judicial rights, and doomed to be treated for ever like dogs or gypsies, as they were commonly termed by their tyrants. A weak Government like Turkey, while England maintained an influence over her councils, could never give cause of alarm for her supremacy in the East.* An independent Christian

* At the Congress of Vienna, the English ministers made a great point of obtaining the protectorate of the Ionian Islands, although the inhabitants had expressed a preference for Russia; as they said, if Russia once obtained a footing in the Mediterranean, "they should never get her out again."—See Wellington's Correspondence.

State like Servia might be the mustard-seed, in time overshadowing the whole Ottoman Empire and infusing energy and life. So Bosnia endured persecution till she became Mahometan, and Servia was overrun and laid waste by a Turkish army to satisfy British interests.

If Tchichagof had been nearer the scene of action, it might have been better to march to Russia; but as it was it would have taken him less time to reach Dalmatia, Austria, or Italy than to arrive in the neighbourhood of Moscow, and he only came up with the French army when it was already in disorderly retreat. If peace had not been concluded, and Tchichagof carried out his scheme, Turkey might have been dissolved—for it was ripe for revolt; the sanguinary Greek revolution compressed into a smaller period; and Moldavia and Wallachia left to Russia. But even in the crisis of September, 1812, Alexander could not be induced to give up the mouth of the Danube and his new boundary of the Pruth without some tangible equivalent. Wilson thought he should make him yield, and wrote to that effect to Mr. Liston, who published it in Turkey, but it led to no result: it did not even save the Vizier from strangulation; and as Alexander had not given his word, but merely said he would talk over the matter with Lord Cathcart, which was too eagerly laid hold of, he could hardly be expected to make the concession, having seen no other proof of the "esteem" of his "high-minded" ally, the Turk.

Wilson reached Smolensko in the midst of the stormy scenes at Barclay's head-quarters, where Constantine urged that the improved artillery since Friedland and Austerlitz ought to enable them to hold the city; and Bagration, a dark-eyed Georgian, as impetuous as the Grand Duke, supported him. They said Barclay thought only of tactics, and trusted nothing to fortune; and hearing that Wilson was to see the Emperor, the Princes of Würtemberg, Oldenburg, and the chief Russian generals requested him to deliver a message which no subject dared give, "that if any order came to suspend hostilities and treat the invaders as friends (supposed to be Romanzov's policy, and the cause of the retreat), it would be regarded as not proceeding from Alexander himself, unless extorted by external control, and the army would continue to

maintain his pledge, and pursue the contest till the French were expelled." Wilson observed great improvements in the commissariat and medical department of their army since he saw it in 1807. The Emperor had left his own doctor, and all others had been sent who could possibly be spared from the civil hospitals. They were well supplied, and had taken 8000 French prisoners. He stopped on his road at Panine's magnificent country house, and informed him the enemy would probably arrive in a few hours. The Count, acting apparently on his advice, sent all his papers and valuable effects to Moscow, where they were burnt; though Napoleon, knowing he had not frequented the Court since he left the ministry in 1801, hoped to find in him a disaffected noble, and gave special orders to respect his property. Wilson met Kutuzov on his way to take the command, and advised him to go a round of eighty miles through Moscow, to calm the excitement and alarm, little thinking of the fate that awaited her in less than three weeks. This was more unfortunate advice, as Kutuzov was required as soon as possible at the army, and his age prevented him from travelling day and night. He also lulled the citizens into false security, for Wilson thought the French would remain for the present at Smolensko, to revolutionize Lithuania, secure the corn districts around Kiov, and prevent Tchichagof's union with Tormassof.

Wilson arrived at St. Petersburg before the Czar returned from Abo, but he saw the two Empresses, who each separately assured him of "her positive confidence in his firm adherence to his word." On September 4th he obtained an audience. Alexander questioned him on the state of Turkey, and of Tchichagof's army, which was excellent. He then referred to the dissensions among his generals, and said he heard that Platof even said to Barclay when Smolensko was abandoned, "You see I wear but a cloak; I will never put on a Russian uniform again, since it has become a disgrace." Wilson, with some explanation, gave the message from the army, suppressing names. It could not fail to distress Alexander, who grew alternately red and pale while he listened, and then turned to the window, as if anxious to recover an unembarrassed air before he replied. In a few moments he told Wilson there was hardly any one from whom he would have taken such a

message. "The army underrates Romanzov, who does not advise submission to Napoleon, and I greatly respect him, for he is almost the only one in my service who never asked for anything on his own account, while the rest are always seeking honours, wealth, or some private object for themselves and connections. I am unwilling to sacrifice him without a cause." He well knew the generals and staff officers. They meant to do their duty, and had no unavowed designs against his authority; but he was unfortunate in having few about him with any sound education or fixed principles, so there was little on which he could rely—only impulses to which he must not give way. His grandmother's Court vitiated the whole education of the empire, limiting it to the acquisition of the language, frivolities, and vices of France, particularly gambling (to which he often attributed the extravagant and fickle character of his people). Wilson might call again the next morning for his answer. When he appeared, Alexander said, "Well, *M. l'ambassade des rebelles*, I thought all night over yesterday's conversation. You shall take to the army pledges of my resolution to continue the war while a Frenchman remains in arms on this side the frontier. I shall not desert my engagements, come what may. I am ready to remove my family into the interior, and undergo every sacrifice, but I shall not give way on the point of choosing my own ministers. Romanzov shall not be the means of any disunion, but I cannot yield to threats, or have to reproach myself for injustice." He then entered on the subject of the British interposition in the treaty of Bucharest. Wilson said the Russian generals attached no military importance to the new boundary line, while the Turks set the greatest value on the recovery of their old limits, and the Grand Vizier offered him 50,000*l.* (of course rejected), exclusive of great rewards from the Sultan, if he succeeded in his negotiations.* The Emperor said he knew to his cost how the Turks spoiled the markets by their extravagant prices, for "we usually employ the same contractors and agents."

Alexander gave as a reason for superseding Barclay, who remained with the army as a general of division, that he had

* Wilson's Russian Campaign.

not acted with all possible activity, which greatly distressed him, though the Emperor told him he should always be his friend. Benningsen* retired from the army after the dispute at Smolensko, but joined it again as quartermaster-general, and Constantine left it intending to follow Alexander to Abo, and press him to make peace, but Kutuzov, who met him on the road, dissuaded him, which was equivalent to a command, for Constantine was now under his orders.† He reached St. Petersburg at night, on August 25th; at eight the next morning called on his mother, and then shut himself up at Strelna, and would receive no one; but soon talked unreservedly, saying it was impossible to remain to see what he had seen—all went on as badly as possible, and peace was absolutely necessary.‡ He became the leader of the peace party, as he had been in 1799 and 1807.

* Benningsen had been in retirement since 1807. "I assure you," writes De Maistre, "he offends my eye, and even more when the Emperor was at the army. However, no one here is disgusted, and no one pays attention to it; so true it is that here we are no longer in Europe, or at least in the middle of an Asiatic race which has advanced into Europe. For me it is an intolerable spectacle, a man who has lifted his hand against his master, and still in possession of all social rights." Nevertheless he had the daring which Barclay required, and had defeated Napoleon.

† This mode of military precedence displeased De Maistre. "The Emperor when at Vilna always put Barclay on his right hand at table, being a general-in-chief, and Constantine on his left. The prince of the blood, in that quality alone, ought to pass over the head of every other degree."

‡ "This discourse," writes De Maistre, "has made the most disagreeable sensation. There are endless rumours as to his return from the army, where he quite changed his character. All letters speak of this metamorphose: they only comment on the politeness, the amenity, and the kind consideration of the Grand Duke. He had become *aimable*. I can assure you it would be difficult to alter more. It is said that when Kutuzov accepted the command, he made it a condition that H.I.M. would not return, nor the Grand Duke, saying he could not reward Constantine if he did well, or punish him if he did ill. . . . I mistrust strongly all reports of these *tête-à-tête* conversations, for who reports them? However, the Grand Duke is here, and says he cannot see the army again after the loss of Smolensko." De Maistre wishes he had to wear a court mourning. . . . "We hear great praises of the plan adopted by the Emperor from England. Nothing is easier at a distance, but look at the consequences. Eight provinces, 7,000,000 of men, and 40,000,000 roubles of revenue lost! Public opinion perverted, murders, incendiaries, profanation, excess of every kind marching from Vilna to Moscow—the greatest fortunes shaken, the safety of St. Petersburg dependent on Wittgenstein's victory! The Princesses Dolgoruki and Alexis Galitzin alone have 20,000 peasants on the road of the French. Think of the taxes! nearly all the peasants turned into soldiers: it would be difficult to play a more terrible game. Even Napoleon fears the evil he is doing; he does not know what to do with

Wilson did not limit his endeavours to remove Romanzov to his interview with Alexander, but wrote most strongly on the subject to Lord Cathcart, saying even the Emperor's person was endangered if he persisted in retaining the Chancellor, and opposing the will of his army and his empire. He quoted Platof, who asked him to tell the Empress and the Grand Duchess that "Romanzov would prove an enemy to his country and a servant to France," and he entreated the ambassador to effect a change. In a time of great national peril there is always some special object of popular hatred to whom current misfortunes are attributed, and a foreigner who had not lived in the country above a month could hardly decide if the outcry were just. It is now believed the rumours of conspiracies and intended attempts on Alexander's life which prevailed in St. Petersburg in September, 1812, originated in French agents, who were most actively employed there,* and in Napoleon's position at Smolensko, the assassination of the Emperor, or any change producing a revolution, would have given him a chance of enlisting one political party in his cause. The Imperial pair spent that autumn in a country house on the island of Kamenioistrov, on the Neva, where late at night Alexander wandered alone in the woods; while in the day his palace, without guards, was open to all, for every available soldier was on his way to the army, and couriers were liable to arrive at any hour to bring news of the war. The Empress-mother took up her abode in the Taurida palace, and recalled her younger sons from Gateschina. Early in the summer Nicholas wrote an appeal to his brother to allow him to join the army; but he was scarcely sixteen, and the Empress-Dowager objected unless he was accompanied by several German officers who had educated him. At a moment when the cry of the army was for no courtiers and no foreign officers, such an escort would have procured him an unwelcome reception, and the presence of an inexperienced prince of the blood would only have embarrassed the commanders. Alexander therefore refused it, on the ground of

the peasants who have escaped into the woods like wild animals. He even proposed, through Berthier, to re-establish the Russian Government in the occupied provinces."—Diplomatic Correspondence.

* Cathcart.

his brother's youth, and Nicholas devoted himself to military matters, particularly to engineering, when he heard that the weakness of Drissa and Smolensko* precipitated the fate of Moscow.

This summer Madame de Staël arrived at St. Petersburg, through Austria. "I do not know what would have become of me," she writes, "if Alexander had not sent a passport to me at Vienna. On entering his empire I felt free for the first time since Bonaparte's reign, not only on account of his virtues, but Russia was the sole country where Napoleon's influence was not felt. On each occasion Alexander has taken the liberal side. We cannot help being astonished at such an instinct for what is beautiful and just, born amid so many obstacles." Stein said she would not please in Russia, where a literary taste was wanting. One evening she went with a young Swiss friend to the French theatre, where Racine's "Phædra" was played by the celebrated Mdle. Georges. The Russians in the pit, in a perfect frenzy, uttered cries of threats and execration, "Turn out the accursed French." The performance was interrupted, and the frightened actors left the stage. Madame de Staël was led away in high indignation. "Oh, the barbarians!" she exclaimed, weeping. "Oh, my Racine!" Arndt, who relates this scene, was astonished at her emotion. "Would a German woman and a young girl weep and sob if they heard a piece by Schiller or Goethe hissed from the stage in London or Paris? On occasion," he adds, "a little of this French and Russian passion would do no harm among us." Shortly afterwards the French theatre was closed till the end of the war.

Madame de Staël was introduced to the Imperial family through her friend and the Empress's aunt, the Duchess Louisa of Saxe-Weimar, and in August she saw the Empress Elizabeth at Kamenistov. "Her manners," she writes, "are very reserved, but what she says is full of life. As I talked to her, the Emperor came to speak to me. I was struck by his expression of goodness and dignity, so seldom combined, yet inseparable with him. I was touched by the noble simplicity with which he alluded to the great interests

* This may partly account for the numerous forts he built. He attained great proficiency in engineering.

of Europe like English statesmen, who put their strength in themselves, and not in the barriers surrounding them. Napoleon has tried to cause him to be misunderstood; but he is a man of ability and remarkable information, and I do not believe there is a minister in his empire stronger than himself in the direction of affairs. He did not conceal that he regretted his former admiration for Napoleon, 'whom he originally esteemed because he believed that he represented the first principles of the French Revolution.' Alexander's grandfather in the same way felt an enthusiasm for Frederick II. He gives and withdraws his confidence with the greatest reflection. His youth and external advantages were alone sufficient at the beginning of his reign to cause him to be suspected of levity, but he is serious for his age, as a man must be who has known misfortune. He expressed his regrets at not being a great captain. I answered to this noble modesty, that a sovereign is rarer than a general, and to sustain the national spirit was to gain the most important battle. He spoke enthusiastically of his nation, and of all she might become. He expressed the desire everybody knows of ameliorating the state of the peasantry still enslaved. 'Sire,' said I, 'your character is a constitution for your empire, and your conscience is the guarantee for it.' 'However that might be,' he answered, 'I should never be anything but a happy accident.'"*

The Russian army continued to retire on Moscow, its vanguard continually engaged, while the hostility of the population increased towards the enemy. Napoleon observed a war was never prosecuted with such ferocity, and defence never put on such a shape against the common feeling of self-preservation. He boasted that these battles were victories, but they served the Russian purpose to waste his men and cover their own retreat, and his generals truly said there was more order in the Russian retreats than in the French success. The most appalling scenes are described by Caulaincourt, Labaume, and others, as they advanced. A peasant carrying an infant and leading his wife, wasted with fever, and a cow, their only possession, were surprised by a French patrol in a forest. The

* Dix ans de l'Exil; also, Madame de Staël's *Lettres to the Duchess of Saxe-Weimar*.

soldiers seized the cow, and the man with a look of despair, after showing by signs it was the only food they had for the child, made a gesture as if to dash its head against the ground rather than let it die slowly of want. A blind old man was bayoneted and thrown out of his hut on the way-side. A young serf captured by some Poles was branded with the letter N on his left hand. He asked what it meant. A soldier knowing the language replied, "It is the initial of the French Emperor; it means that you are his subject." The man at once chopped off his hand, saying, "There is what belongs to him; the rest of me will ever remain faithful to the Czar." As Napoleon had taken pains to cover his march from Smolensko by sending patrols on the St. Petersburg road, this district was not deserted, but the work of destruction was fully carried out by the French. Viazma, and every village they passed, was consumed. Labaume laments over the beautiful country houses filled with objects of luxury and art; but the officers had no power over their men, and even Junot in trying to check them nearly perished.

Barclay had resolved to give battle to satisfy his army, when Kutuzov arrived and chose the position of Borodino, seventy miles from Moscow. It is thought by military critics that the first plan for the command of the Russian army was preferable to the appointment of so old a man as Kutuzov, for the extremes of heat and cold were trying even to strong constitutions, and in him produced unusual drowsiness. Benningsen was seventy, but possessed the rashness of youth. If Alexander had led the army with the bold Bagration, they would have supplied the enterprise Barclay* was supposed to need, and Barclay's caution and slowly developed ideas would have moderated their ardour in the councils of war. The Emperor's† return was desired by all but the chiefs, and his pre-

* He had conducted the retreat more than 400 miles without a single battalion being broken or a standard captured, and without sustaining nearly so great a loss as the enemy.

† "No man," says Sir George Cathcart, in his Campaign of 1812-13, "was more capable of assuming the chief command than the Emperor himself; but possibly diffidence of his own opinions at this important period, and the political affairs which required his utmost vigilance at the seat of government, . . . explain his determination to depute the command to other hands," though, he adds, that he preserved the supreme direction, Volkonski being his chief aide-de-camp.

sence would have stopped the rivalry which Cathcart states impaired the capability of the army for prompt action. From August 29th, the vanguard and rearguard of the two armies kept up skirmishes which would have ranked as great battles if they had not been eclipsed by the mighty conflict of September 7th. On the 6th, Kutuzov, preceded by a holy picture rescued from Smolensko, reviewed his army. "Fear not," he said, "but that the Almighty will extend his buckler over your ranks, and oppose his enemy with the sword of St. Michael. In that belief I set out to combat, to conquer, and if needs be to die, assured that my eyes shall behold victory. Think of your ravaged churches, of your cities in flames, of your children, of your Emperor who considers you the strength of his arm, and mark your loyalty and faith in the blood of the aggressor."

Napoleon and Kutuzov took the same means though in a different form to stimulate the zeal of their soldiers. The first appealed entirely to their loyalty to himself and his family, exhibited a picture of his son, wept over it with the theatrical skill which was by no means the least of his talents, and pointed out the Russians as a savage nation only fit for extermination. Kutuzov appealed to their religious feelings against professed infidels. "In the Russian camp," wrote Colonel de Baudus, "they sanctified the vigil of a day which must be the last for so many brave men. It afforded ribaldry to most of our officers, but reminded me that our greatest king, Charlemagne, began his perilous enterprises with a religious service." On September 2nd Napoleon sent orders to his officers to collect all stragglers, as they were on the eve of a decisive battle, and the returns gave 140,000 fighting men and 1000 guns. Allowing for those divisions detached on other service, he had already lost 105,000 of his central army. He surveyed the plain of Borodino from the top of the monastery of Kolotskoi. The Russians numbered 90,000, with 10,000 militia of Moscow, who had joined a day or two and never seen a battle, and 7000 Cossacks. They had 640 guns, of which about 268 bore the chief part in the battle.*

Napoleon took his station behind a redoubt in the centre of the field, though behind the combatants, and beyond the range of fire. Ségur's assertion was contradicted by all his

* Wilson.

staff, that he could not thoroughly survey the field. His secretary, his physician, and other officers also denied that he was ill or torpid. He gave his orders with his usual coolness and precision, though aware, and somewhat depressed by the fact that he had never commanded in so desperate a combat, or when a total defeat would have involved such complete ruin. "It must be an artillery battle," he said; and the Russian army was bombarded as if it were a stone wall. He was 500 miles in the heart of an enraged empire, and on its issue depended the fate of the campaign. Not one of his present opponents was in his pay, not one likely to desert their ranks, and the constancy with which he repeated that the Czar should be made to accept peace, and would be forced to do it by his nobles if Moscow was lost, showed those about him that he had long seen that Caulaincourt and Narbonne were correct in their opinion of Alexander. All this was enough to make him unusually silent, and lower the tone he had hitherto employed on the eve of a battle. At six A.M. the French began to fire, and attacked the Russian position at Borodino. The village was taken and retaken during the day with immense slaughter. Bagration, Voronzov, and other generals were carried away wounded. The overpowering artillery on the French side told with fearful effect, but the young Russian militia reserve, armed with pikes, supported a cannonade from eighty guns with the utmost firmness, and their heroic courage as they poured upon the only redoubt finally held by the French extorted words of praise even from Napoleon. At three P.M. he withdrew his army, but the cannonade went on till nightfall, and Borodino, the key of the Russian positions, remained intact. All the French except the Imperial guard were engaged, and when Napoleon was asked to send these to help Davoust and Ney, he refused, "for if the Russians give battle to-morrow, what force should I have left to command the victory?"

This refusal has been censured, as it opposed his principle, that a battle ought to be so completely won as not to admit of the chance of another the next day; but in this case the Russians were resolved to die where they stood. His fresh troops advancing under Victor were still distant, and he would have been in a most perilous position if his reserve had been left a disorganized

mass. "Never have we seen such a field," he said, as he retired, and every precaution was taken against an attack on his camp, which he fully expected the next morning. Some of the Russians bivouacked in advance of their position the day before,* and the Cossacks entered the French lines in the night, compelling the Imperial Guard to stand to their arms. The pursuit was left to them; for though the generals entreated Kutuzov to form the rest of his forces into columns, and make a night attack on Napoleon's camp, he objected, as they must pass over the dead bodies of their countrymen. He had not yet recovered his journey, and the night was cold, so perhaps the energies of a septuagenarian were wanting after such a trying day. Many of the wounded Russians were conveyed in carts to a place of safety during the battle, the rest were collected and borne with their army as it moved the next day into a fresh position at Mojaïsk. When the Russians withdrew, Napoleon rode over the field and ordered his soldiers to collect the cannon balls, as the French had only ammunition left for one more battle.† He claimed Borodino as a victory, and Ney was created Prince of the Moskva‡ (as it was termed), to mislead Paris; but at the very most he could only boast of a drawn battle, and such it was esteemed at the time by his army. Even Ségur admits the French had not taken 800 prisoners, and those were all wounded, while the Russians captured 5000; that "during the night the Russians made us sensible of their vicinity by their tiresome clamours; next morning there was an alert close to the Emperor's tent, the Old Guard was obliged to run to arms, the army remained motionless till noon, or rather it may be said there was no longer an army but a single vanguard." "If ever there was one," said Arndt, who, while thinking Russia was made for the rescue of

* Sir James Wylie told Sir A. Alison he was one of these.

† The French stated that they fired off 90,000 rounds of gun-ammunition, and that every soldier used 100 cartridges. They owned to the loss of 35,000 men; but it is asserted, on good authority, that it was 12,000 killed and 38,000 wounded. The Russians lost 15,000 killed and 22,000, or some say 30,000, wounded. Koutaissof and Touthkof were killed, and Voronzov, St. Priest, Gortchakof, Yermolof, Galitzin, Goutchkov, and eleven other generals were wounded, besides 1800 officers. Twenty-six French generals were placed *hors de combat*.

‡ Ney always avoided using this title, and dropped it altogether after Napoleon's abdication.

Germany, was still jealous of the Russian success, "Borodino was a drawn battle. The Russians voluntarily abandoned the field to unite with their southern army, and it implied no fresh success when the French entered Moscow, merely the result of that movement."* Wellington states that "Borodino was not a defeat of the Russians; their rearguard successfully contended with Murat the day after the battle for the possession of Mojaïsk, and did not quit that town till the second day after the battle, and then the French did not know on which side they had retired. . . . The habit of Napoleon had been to astonish and deceive mankind, and he had come at last to deceive himself."†

The French accommodated many of their wounded in the monastery of Kolotskoi, where they found six monks who surprised them by their knowledge of public affairs and their mockery of the French nation, who submitted to heavy taxes to satisfy the luxury of an obscure family insatiable for pleasure, and saw their children perish merely to exalt Napoleon, who took all the credit of their victories to himself, and gave none to France.

After the loss of Smolensko, Rostopchine offered all the people of Moscow to leave the city, but only the women quitted it. The men engaged not to let Napoleon enter except over their bodies or its blackened remains.‡ When Kutuzov passed through on his way to the army, he assured Rostopchine, on Wilson's authority, that the French would not advance further that season; but if the city was endangered, he swore by his grey hairs he would give him three days' notice, so that everything might be removed, and the whole place be destroyed. Rostopchine never forgave Kutuzov for not keeping his word, and enabling him to strike his blow with more effect. In a city of 300,000 he could not depend on the lowest classes and numerous foreigners, as to whether they might not prefer to share the prey with the enemy, and prevent its destruction. He remembered Pugachef's revolt in 1772, and the eagerness with which he was awaited in Moscow.

* *Erinnerungen*, 1840.

† Wellington Correspondence for 1825. Ségur's assertion that Murat wanted to pursue the Russians "as they were crossing the Moskva," is untrue; and the Moskva did not lie in their line of retreat.

‡ De Maistre, September 14th.

He gave out that he would burn her rather than yield her to Napoleon, yet dare not announce his preparations. He owned later that these fears were groundless. The serfs' attachment to Alexander, who had proved their friend, was very different to that felt for his grandmother; besides, Pugachef was a Russian, calling himself their true Czar. A few old men still believing in his identity with Peter III., to whom they paid almost Divine honours, advanced to meet Napoleon, supposing him to be this prince, whom they expected to come again to reign over his devoted people. The French did not understand them; and thinking they were conducting a religious ceremony, beat them; but this incident has been much exaggerated, as it was the only occasion on which the Russians showed the slightest symptom of fraternizing with the French. Far from fearing to cause extra horrors if he tried to raise a servile insurrection, Napoleon sought to do so, but failed, and the barbarity of the confederate army had long made any conciliation perfectly hopeless. On leaving Mojaïsk, Kutuzov took up a position at Fili, about a mile and a half from Moscow, where Rostopchine went to confer with him early on the 13th. He found him sitting by a fire surrounded by officers asking for orders; he sent them either to Toll, Barclay, or Benningsen, as if incapable of thinking of any plan. He told Rostopchine he meant to fight again on that spot, or else retreat towards Tver, to protect St. Petersburg. He rejected every proposal to take the Kaluga road, which Benningsen had advised at Mojaïsk, as the best means of protecting Moscow; for he said Napoleon might change his road, and leaving the Russian army in the rear, advance on St. Petersburg. Doctorof opposed Tver, because he could not take the artillery that way, and Barclay urged a retreat on Nijni Novgorod, telling Rostopchine he only hoped for death if they were mad enough to fight where they stood. "Benningsen," said Rostopchine, "whom I had not seen since the death of the Emperor Paul, came to me. I surmounted my horror at the chief of the executioners of my benefactor, and learned from him that he did not believe in the battle Kutuzov announced. . . . The soldiers were sad, the officers cast down; a terrible chaos; everywhere a dispute." He returned to Moscow prepared to assist in the expected battle with the

militia, and left the generals assembling in council. At eleven P.M. the Princes of Würtemberg and Oldenburg arrived to urge him to come back to induce Kutuzov to give battle, and not abandon Moscow. They had been excluded from the council, but Rostopchine said if the Emperor's own uncle and cousin could not prevail on the commander to alter his views, he certainly should not succeed, and must stay to prepare for evacuating the city. He told the Prince of Würtemberg that, as Rostopchine, he should say, "Burn the capital rather than yield it," but, as its governor, he was responsible for its safety. "I am not a Russian," said the Prince, "and there is only one Russian who has a right to give such counsel." He returned to the camp, and repeated the Governor's remark. "It is incredible," he said; "it would be a colossal act, and yet the remedy in this terrible crisis."

The next day Rostopchine assembled the nobles and merchants, recalling to them their promises to the Emperor six weeks ago, "when the father of his country received from his children the gifts of their lives and fortune." He told them that Tchichagof and Wittgenstein were manœuvring on the flanks of the enemy, who, when their new levies had arrived, must perish. He imagined because his eagle had flown from the Tagus to the Moskva, it could prevail over that which extended one wing to the Pole and the other to the Bosphorus; but Russia would rise only more majestic from her ruins, and no sacrifice, even that of her dearest affections, was too great to preserve her honour and independence. Another orator made a long quotation from Alexander's recent speech. They were warmly applauded, and all present except seven voted for the conflagration of Moscow.

Kutuzov had still 65,000 soldiers, besides 6000 Cossacks, and was not aware of the state of the French forces, when he decided on a step to which some attribute Napoleon's preservation and the length of the campaign. But the French had just received reinforcements, and, in spite of their losses, greatly outnumbered his own army. He did not realize that his adversary, surrounded by the lieutenants who had overthrown Prussia, Italy, and Austria, could have drawn himself into such a position that he was on the verge of a retreat; for Ney strongly urged him to fall back on Smolensko to await



his supplies. On September 12th, Napoleon stopped the march of all his columns when within twenty-five miles of Moscow, thinking the Russians had withdrawn by his left on the road to Kaluga, and were manœuvring to gain his rear; but finding his error, he went on, and by the 14th came in sight of the venerated city, with its gilded domes and gaily-painted roofs flashing in the sun. "There at last," he said, "is that famous city; it was high time." In the mean while the Russian army was marching through the city, and out at the Kolomna gate, with 180,000 of its people, 65,000 carriages of every description, 96 fire-engines and the artillery; and ambulances containing 17,000 wounded, besides the litter in which Bagration lingered in the last agonies till they reached Vladimir, where he expired. "Salute Moscow for the last time," said Rostopchine to his son, as they rode together past the barrier. "In half an hour you will see her in flames." While he conducted the people out of the city, and provided them with shelter in the neighbouring towns, the plan he had devised for the conflagration was efficiently carried out. He left bombshells and combustible materials in the principal buildings, except the churches and hospitals, releasing 300 criminals from the gaols, and placing them under directors each to fire a certain portion, so that not a house should escape.* The nobles left a servant in their palaces, with orders to ignite

* In the summer of 1812 Moscow contained 312,000 inhabitants, exclusive of foreigners; and in the winter held more than 400,000. It covered an area of thirty-five miles, and enclosed woods, parks, and ornamental lakes. The libraries and picture galleries excelled in value those of many kings. The public institutions were on the grandest scale; an aqueduct fifteen miles long supplied the city with fresh water—it was begun by Catherine, and finished by Alexander. There were nine infirmaries, besides five large hospitals, described by Baron Larrey, the chief surgeon of the French army, as worthy of the most civilized nation in the world. "The military hospital," he wrote, "is the largest and most beautiful I have ever seen. The civil hospitals are equally worthy of attention. The four principal are the Sheremetov, the Galitzin, the Alexander, and that of the Foundlings. The greatest cleanliness and order reign everywhere." The pharmaceutical establishment was also the first in Europe. "In Moscow we might imagine ourselves on the public square of ancient Athens: on one side the Areopagus and the Temple of Minerva, on the other the Academy and the Arsenal. The varied colours of the roofs of the houses, the gold and silver which covers the domes and the capitals of the belfries give to this city the most picturesque aspect. Nothing equals the riches of one of the churches of the Kremlin—it was the tomb of the Emperors."

them, though many had been built and furnished at an enormous cost. It was no momentary passion, for they felt the immense sacrifice, and a foreign officer who ordered a lively air to be played as his company quitted the city excited the utmost indignation; but all earnestly hoped that their ruined homes might become the grave of the invaders.

Miloradovitz destroyed the bridges over the Moskva, and Murat with the advanced guard, impatient for the promised plunder, crossed it with two guns by a ford. At the Kremlin they were assailed by some Russian workmen employed to clear the arsenal, who had not time to escape; and he wrote to his wife that he "never in his whole life was in such wild danger." Napoleon would scarcely credit the first news that the city was deserted; "the Russians only did not know how to surrender." He is said to have formed resolutions of mercy which he never practised elsewhere, and to grant Alexander very easy conditions if he would acknowledge himself conquered by asking peace. He was weary of a war in which he had never inflicted a thorough defeat on the enemy; but on the contrary, his boasted cavalry had been several times forced to fly. In Moscow he hoped to find supplies, luxuries, rest, and a real triumph. He took up his abode in the Kremlin on the 15th, when the fire had already begun, and surveyed Moscow from the ramparts. "At length," he said, "I am in the ancient palace of the Czars—yet the means they employ annihilate my conquests even more surely than cannon and steel." He wrote at once to offer peace to Alexander, and Caulaincourt thinks this humiliation ought to be considered one of his greatest acts. But the increasing flames induced him to remove to Petrovsky, a Chinese-looking mansion outside the city, once inhabited by the father of Peter I. "What a people," he exclaimed; "what extraordinary resolution. The nation cannot recover it for a hundred years.* These are Scythians indeed!"†

* Also his bulletin.

† In Rostopchine's book on the conflagration, he alludes to the appeal Napoleon made from St. Helena to the European Powers, stating, among other claims to their consideration, that he personally exposed himself to extinguish the fire of Moscow. The Count expresses his surprise at this assertion, as Napoleon certainly incurred no danger in his wish to save Moscow. "His amazing efforts were limited to mounting his horse as soon as the fire appeared, and galloping to the distance of two English

In the mean time the French troops narrowly escaped destruction, forced to fly from every palace where they had taken up their abode. Men were seen spreading the fire with tarred poles. Bombshells exploded in the stoves of private houses, wounding the soldiers who had collected round them. In vain they executed every Russian they could find, in case he was an incendiary. The flames burnt steadily for six days, and destroyed all but a tenth of the city. During September 18th and 19th nothing could exceed the wild licence of the soldiery, who even tore open the Imperial tombs. Ros-topchine carried off an enormous quantity of provisions, but they still found an abundance of salt meat in the cellars or buried in the ground. In their drunken revelry they wasted what they could not eat at once, and their wounded perished from fire and want. A Russian priest stayed to protect his own chapel, and celebrated mass on the coronation day of his Emperor. It was the only relief in a scene like pandemonium ; the roar of the tempest, the crackling of the fire, the shouts and screams of the French soldiers, when scorched and black with smoke they tried to save splendid furniture, Persian robes, or any clothing they could find to cover their rags, as they encamped during wet nights in the open air. They had marched 1000 miles to find the riches which allured them, and a submissive population, but arrived at their goal only to meet with new privations. At Erfurt Alexander advised his rival to become peaceful, and his answer was the immense preparation for the Russian campaign. But now the conflagration was the only reply to Napoleon's repeated offers of peace.

When the first shots were interchanged at Borodino, Kutuzov sent off a courier to Alexander to announce the battle had begun. The Emperor passed the night in an anxious

miles from the town, to place himself in safety. He passed three days and three nights in a palace in the midst of a corps of troops, who bivouacked and only returned to Moscow on the fourth day, when the conflagration had ceased, after having consumed 7632 houses. I was well informed of all passing by means of six officers disguised, who remained undiscovered during the whole of Bonaparte's stay at Moscow ; but on quitting it he set fire to the Palace of the Kremlin, among others, and to the Castle of Petrovsky, which had served him as an asylum during the fire. Perhaps he did it as an act of kindness, to purify them from the evils he had been the source of."

state of suspense, for he felt that the fate of Moscow depended on the result. But in the morning another despatch arrived bringing tidings, as it seemed, of a decisive victory. "The batteries," wrote the general, "passed from one to the other, and the enemy has in no part gained an inch of ground, remaining at night masters of the field. So soon as I have recruited my troops, supplied my artillery, and reinforced my army from Moscow, I shall see what I can undertake against the enemy." To his wife he wrote, "I am not conquered; I have gained a battle over Bonaparte." But he omitted that he was going to leave his position at Borodino for Mojaisk.* It was the day of St. Alexander Nevskoi, always celebrated by a state mass. Some effort was made to prevent the Emperor from attending it as usual, owing to rumours that his life was to be attempted on the road. He drove to the cathedral with the Empress and his sister Anna, followed by his brothers on horseback, amid a gloomy threatening crowd, exasperated by the loss of Smolensko. As soon as the liturgy was concluded, Prince Gortchakof, the acting minister of war, read Kutuzov's despatch to the congregation, and also the Emperor's rewards; 200,000 roubles to Kutuzov, 100,000 to Bagration, appropriate remuneration to the officers, and five to every private. Constantine chilled the public enthusiasm by openly declaring, "Of what use is this great victory? we have no longer an army." "Those," wrote Doctorof, "who have seen Borodino, have seen the infernal regions."

Alexander now expected to save Moscow. He sent off Czernichef with a plan of operations, provided it was still applicable by the time it arrived. It accurately calculated the movements of the enemy, and directed either another battle or the very step Benningsen and some others had recommended—a march on the Kaluga road instead of straight on Moscow, to draw off the enemy till the arrival of Tchichagof or a larger body of the new troops. Madame Kutuzov was made a lady of honour at the court, and Barclay, Bagration, Miloradovitz, Doctorof, and other officers were the objects of

* "The anger against the Chancellor is at its height," writes De Maistre. "He and the Grand Duke still cry out for peace." Romanzov gave a dinner on Alexander's fête day, which no man of rank would attend.

high distinction. Then tidings were received of the enormous loss in the battle, and the French residents in St. Petersburg spread a report that Moscow was taken, but it was not believed. No official news arrived till the 18th, when Alexander received a hasty letter from Rostopchine, dated September 13th, and forwarded through Yaroslaf. "Majesty," it ran, "Kutuzov's conduct decides the fate of the capital and the empire. Russia will shudder when she hears of the evacuation of Moscow, where the grandeur of the state is concentrated and the dust of your ancestors repose. I am with the army, and carry away everything. It only remains for me to weep over the fate of my country." Alexander sent for his confidential aide-de-camp, Volkonski, and gave him an autograph letter for Kutuzov, charging him to go at once to ascertain the position of the army, and the commander's intentions. "Since August 29th (September 10th), I have been without news from you," he wrote. "In the mean while I hear from the military governor of Moscow that you have resolved to abandon the town with your army. You may judge of the effect this has produced, and your silence increases my agitation. I send this by Prince Volkonski, that you may acquaint him yourself with the state of the army, and the motives which determined you to take this fatal resolution."

Kutuzov had written to the Emperor by Colonel Michaud, who, going through Vladimir and Yaroslaf, was five days on the journey. Before he arrived the official Gazette announced*

* "The enemy entered Moscow September 1st (o s.). It might be expected that consternation should be general at this news, but let us disdain a pusillanimous despondency. Let us swear rather to redouble our perseverance and our courage; let us hope that, whilst combating in a cause so just as ours, we may direct upon the head of our enemy the calamities he is heaping up for our destruction! Moscow, it is true, is in his hands, but our army is not disgraced or dispersed. The General yielded to a necessity, but only to reunite with advancing forces, to snatch from the enemy his ephemeral triumph!" He described the forces gathering in all parts of Russia, and the disorganized state of the enemy, and encouraged his people to persevere in the war for the rescue of Europe. "An oppressed world looks to us for encouragement, and can we shrink from such an honourable mission! Let us kiss the hand that selected us to act as the leaders of nations in the struggle for independence . . . and contend with courage and constancy to obtain a durable peace, not only for us, but for those unhappy countries, forced by the tyrant to fight in his quarrel; it is glorious, it is worthy a great people, to render good for ill! Almighty God, is the cause for which we are battling not just? Cast an eye of compassion on our holy Church. Preserve to this people its courage

the loss of Moscow, which caused the greatest sensation. Alexander sent for Lord Cathcart, and told him that not for one or twenty such calamities would he abandon the contest; and rather than sign a disgraceful peace, he would leave Europe altogether and retire into Asia. Michaud arrived on the 21st at Kamenioostrov. The Emperor did not keep him a moment waiting, and said as he entered the room, "You bring me sad news." "Very sad, Sire; the evacuation of Moscow." "Did they give up my old capital without a struggle?" "Sire, the environs of Moscow offer no position to hazard a battle with inferior forces. The marshal thought he did well in preserving your army, whose loss without saving Moscow would have been of the greatest consequence, and which by the reinforcements your Majesty has just procured, and which I met everywhere along my road, will soon retake the offensive and make the enemy repent of entering Russia." "Has he actually occupied the town itself?" "Yes, Sire; it is in ashes at this moment. I left it in flames." "The expression in the Emperor's eyes," wrote Michaud, "showed me so well the state of his soul, that I was greatly moved. After a moment of troubled thoughts, he recovered his voice and said, 'I see Providence exacts from us great sacrifices. I am ready to submit to His dispensations. But had not the sight of the old capital thus abandoned a most discouraging effect on the spirit of the soldiers?'" "Sire," answered Michaud, "permit me to speak to you as a loyal soldier. I left the army, from the chiefs to the last soldier, possessed by one fear;" he paused and added—"lest your Majesty from extreme kindness of heart should be persuaded to make peace. They burn to fight and to prove by the sacrifice of their lives how much they are devoted to you." "I saw," he writes, "that my words produced a salutary balm, and restored the Emperor's composure, which was for a moment disturbed when told that his army was afraid." "Assure those brave men," he said, "tell all my subjects wherever you meet them, that if I had not a soldier left, I and constancy. Suffer it to triumph over its adversary and Thine. May it be in Thy hand the instrument of his destruction; and, in delivering itself, redeem the independence of nations and kings!"

"ALEXANDER."

would put myself at the head of my beloved nobles, of my faithful peasants, and use the last resources of my empire. It offers me more than the enemy imagines. But if it is written in the Divine decrees that my dynasty must cease to reign, I will let my beard grow to my waist, and dig potatoes in Siberia, rather than sign the shame of my country, whose sacrifices I know how to appreciate." He stopped and walked to the end of the room ; but at once returning with long strides, his face changing from deadly pale to fiery red, he put his hand tightly on his aide-de-camp's arm and said, " Do not forget what I have told you. Napoleon or me, I or Napoleon ; we can no longer reign at once. He will deceive me no more." The warmth with which he spoke affected Michaud. " Sire," he cried, " your Majesty signs the glory of the nation and Europe's deliverance."

Kutuzov wrote : " After the sanguinary but glorious victory of August 26th (o.s.) I nevertheless left my position near Borodino, for reasons I have stated to you, and may now add another, in my comparatively enfeebled army, where every individual fought to conquer or die. The enemy being reinforced, another battle would have been folly ; I therefore changed my position, and turned towards Moscow. Daily skirmishes took place between the troops and the enemy's advanced guard ; but no vantage ground presented itself in that short distance, and my expected reinforcements not arriving, to seek a battle would have been a useless waste of blood, and exposure of my brave troops to the disgrace of an overthrow. The risk would have been unpardonable ; for though the reinforced army of Napoleon would have counted more than double our number, yet in defeat there is always a sense of dishonour as well as of inferiority ; and how far would I not lead the Russian soldier from any chance of incurring this appalling feeling ! Its unfavourable issue would have not only annihilated the last remains of the army, but also Moscow, threatened with becoming a heap of ashes. In this extremely critical position I consulted with our principal generals. I imparted to them what I anticipated must accrue from the relative state of the two armies ; I informed them of the alternative between loyalty to their country and vassalage to

the invader, decided on in case of extremity by the noble inhabitants of the ancient city of the Czars. Some of my generals dissented from me, but most agreed, and I resolved to leave the enemy a free entrance into Moscow, whence all the treasures, the arsenal, all which belonged to the Crown, and even the goods of private individuals, were carried away to a place of safety. With their property most of the people departed, and Moscow was left a mere desert of walls and houses, without an inhabitant. Call to mind the human body when deserted by the soul. So is Moscow when abandoned by its citizens. The soul of an empire is its people, and where they are there is Moscow, there is the Empire of Russia. I dare, very gracious lord and sovereign, to represent to you that the entrance of the enemy into Moscow is still very far from being equivalent to the submission of Russia, or the subjugation of the capital of the Czars. I do not deny that this desperate alternative is a wound to all our hearts, a stroke that must pierce every Russian breast; but then it is a city for an empire, the inundation of a part to save the whole. Already it affords me the means of preserving my army entire. I possess the Toulâ road, and cover with the extended line of my troops the storehouse of our resources, the abundant provinces of the empire furnishing our armies with their flocks and their harvests. Had I taken any other position, or persisted in maintaining Moscow, I must have abandoned these provinces to the enemy, and the consequence would have been the destruction of my army and the loss of the empire. Now I hold an unmolested communication with Tormassof and Tchichagof, and am enabled to form a united chain with my whole force, that empowers me, beginning from the Toulâ and Kaluga roads, to completely intersect the enemy's line of operations, stretching from Smolensko to Moscow. I cut off every succour he may have in his rear, and hope to compel him in the end to quit the capital. Meanwhile General Vinzingerode has received my orders to occupy Tver, and at the same time to place a regiment of Cossacks on the road to Yaroslaf, to protect its inhabitants from the incursions of the enemy's flying parties. I watch the enemy's movements, and guard the resources of the empire; for as long as your Imperial Majesty's army exists, and it will

exist as long as there is a Russian alive to defend his country, the loss of Moscow is not the loss of the empire. Your Majesty will doubtless deign to agree that these are the inevitable consequences of the loss of Smolensko, and of the state of disorganization in which I found the army. But Moscow's ruins will be repaired, and the glory of the empire brighten by the very attempts made to extinguish its existence. The village of Gilino, September 4th (16th), 1812."

No subsequent triumphs ever effaced Alexander's deep grief at this event. He wrote to Kutuzov: "I will not reproach you, but posterity will severely judge you;" and he authorized the blame cast by the State-Council on the Commander-in-Chief at the Session of September 22nd. The foreigners who were congregated in St. Petersburg, particularly Arndt, condemned his regret for the destruction of the home of 300,000 people, universally declared to be the most singular and picturesque city in Europe. The master of an empire still in its infancy, with a most insufficient revenue for carrying out the public improvements, and the measures of education and emancipation on which he had expended his means and energies while it was at peace, was not to breathe a sigh over a desolation which cost Russia 50,000,000*l.* sterling, and put a check to all his schemes of freeing the peasants, with a compensation to their masters, to the end of his reign! If one-tenth or one-hundredth part of the sacrifices Russia had cheerfully endured, or of the energies and patriotism she evinced during this war, had been displayed years before by Holland, Germany, and Italy, Napoleon would never have crossed the Elbe. But there the emigrants remained, many supported by Alexander's bounty, and yet rejoicing at this loss, as they believed it would ruin their tyrant, and free their own countrymen, while these very people were still hesitating to strike the blow. If Austria had not joined France, but only remained neutral, Moscow would have been saved, for it would have released the army of Tormassof, and Napoleon might have been captured, for it was she who delayed Tchichagof. If Prussia, instead of coveting the Baltic provinces, had shown that her soul was not as well as her body utterly prostrate, and at least refused to let her army march against her former ally, who expended so much in her

behalf, Wittgenstein could have made a diversion on the Smolensko road, instead of being obliged to guard St. Petersburg, and the beautiful suburbs of Riga would have been spared. And yet the fellow-subjects of those who were flattering and assisting their own destroyers, and were sheltered in Russia, could accuse Alexander* of a craven policy, because he did not smile at the ruin of the fairest part of his empire. May a parent not mourn the loss of his most beautiful child, even though he would not recall her from a brighter sphere? No pressure was required to support Alexander's resolution to prolong the war. He had throughout declared he would not lay down his arms while an armed Frenchman remained in Russia, and he was never known to break his plighted word. His original instructions to Kutuzov were to carry on no negotiations whatever with the enemy. He strictly adhered to this point, and his censure had no effect on public opinion, which still supported the marshal, and attributed the national misfortunes to Phull, Barclay, Paulucci, and the foreign officers. He might answer a German with some irritation when congratulated on the heroic sacrifice of his capital, but in his proclamation he allowed no feeling to escape him which could increase the prevalent feeling of gloom. He briefly mentioned it in a letter to Bernadotte. "This loss is cruel, but more in a moral and political sense than a military. After this scourge all others will be trifles. I repeat the solemn assurance, that more than ever, I and the nation at whose head I have the honour to be, are resolved to persevere and to bury ourselves under the ruins of the empire rather than compromise with this modern Attila."

But the peace party would not be silent.† Romanzov,

* Arndt owns that Alexander was capable of "the highest flights," but that the people of St. Petersburg were unable to appreciate the destruction of Moscow (which he had visited in all its beauty, and described just before; the Kremlin with its golden gates, &c., &c.). When Stein saw the Emperor shortly after the catastrophe, he observed that its entrance by the French implied no fresh success, as its abandonment was merely a military movement to unite with the army of the south. "Yes," said the Czar, irritably, "they have destroyed it for ever." So the Germans could talk, forgetting what Moscow was to Russia.

† On September 23rd, De Maistre writes: "Russia will exist no more. The Emperor will not talk of peace." "The odious Constantine," says Arndt, "went about like an apostle of ruin, calling for peace as men call for water in a conflagration. The Empress-mother cried peace. Constantine was a traitor doing Napoleon's work."

Aratchaief, the Empress-mother, and Constantine recoiled at giving up Russia, like Spain, to an endless war; Volkonski, Tolstoi, and those in attendance on the Emperor shared the same feeling, except Kotchoubey, who always adopted his master's views.* All communication was cut off between the Empresses and their German relatives; but in the last letter the young Empress received from her mother, the Margravine urged her to induce Alexander to make peace. Napoleon had sworn his destruction. He would raise a revolution against him in Russia. The timid Elizabeth implored her husband with tears to make peace or allow her to leave the empire. He told her it was her part to sustain the spirit of the nation, not to leave it in the height of its calamity. The Empress-mother would not ask her son's permission, but early in September announced her preparations for removing to England. He gently tried to dissuade her and to calm her fears. Such a course would cause a dangerous panic. She persisted. "Madam," he said at last, "I have entreated you as a son; I now order you as your sovereign to remain in Russia," and she stayed. Yet the strength of the peace faction kept him, till affairs had taken a favourable turn, from repairing as he had intended, and as Rostopchine desired, to the camp. The Senate made a formal complaint to him of his brother-in-law's waste of their resources; for as Governor of Tver and Yaroslaf he destroyed the magazines under his control, lest they should be seized by the enemy. Alexander expressed his displeasure, and sent him to join the army. His wife, much distressed, asked Baron Wolzogen, an Imperial aide-de-camp on his road to St. Petersburg, to intercede with her brother for the Prince, whom she knew was unpopular, as he was a foreigner. "The Emperor," writes Wolzogen, "received me kindly, but, like all the Imperial family, appeared extremely cast down; the Empress-mother was beside herself at the unfortunate events of the war." When Wolzogen gave his own version of Kutuzov's conduct and movements after Borodino, Alexander exclaimed that the general had not written to him one word of these details; on the contrary, "reported a tissue of falsehoods." The colonel took the

* Lord Walpole.

opportunity to praise Barclay, and point out the wisdom of his measures, earnestly requesting Alexander not to "withdraw his favour from this worthy general." The Czar replied, "Barclay is slow of comprehension, and has often not understood me; but that he is a loyal man, who devotes all his faculties to me and the country, I completely share your conviction, and have always done so. I know very well that, as a *man*, he is far above Kutuzov. I shall always hold Barclay in high esteem, and I will employ him again when the time shall come. All the same, at this moment he must remain in exile, as the public calls for his retirement. If, however, you have an occasion of telling the general my feelings with respect to him, do so; but otherwise do not tell any one of the substance of our conversation."*

Barclay remained under Kutuzov's orders till September 25th, when he gave up his post, and returned to Livonia. He heard himself on all sides accused of being the cause of the loss of Moscow, and asked to be relieved of his duties after Borodino. He wrote to Alexander: "In what regards me personally, I submit without a murmur to my fate. The great wish I had not having been realized on August 26th, and Providence having preserved my life, however wearisome to me, it only remains to me to request your Majesty to grant the prayer I had the honour of addressing to you in my last letter." His despondency was enough to unfit him for a command. Clausewitz and some other Prussian officers who were ordered to St. Petersburg, came to take leave of him shortly before he retired, and he congratulated them on being called away; "for you may depend upon it nothing good can ever come out of this unfortunate business." "We saw things in a different light," writes Clausewitz; "but then we were foreigners, anticipating great benefits to the general cause from the Russian success, and did not feel as deeply as they did the losses they had just sustained, and the ravages to which their country was exposed." Barclay added to his unpopularity by surrounding himself with Livonian and German officers. The second in command of Bagration's army—Yermolof—called at his head-quarters when before Smolensko, and inquired if *by chance* there was any officer who could speak

* Schnitzler's *La Russie en 1812*.

Russian, "for, if so, I will beg him to announce me to the Commander-in-chief." "At the next promotion I shall ask to be advanced to the dignity of German," the same officer observed. Barclay addressed a memoir to the Emperor in justification of himself from his home in Livonia, and Alexander sent him a long answer, which seemed completely to satisfy him, and asked him to come to St. Petersburg to assist at the council of war. When the Russians crossed the frontier in pursuit, he was given a fresh command. A society of ladies was formed at St. Petersburg for the relief of those who had lost their homes and property, and the former inhabitants of Smolensko were settled on lands in Southern Russia. Alexander forwarded 20,000,000 roubles to Rostopchine to assist the citizens of Moscow, and clothing was sent to them from all parts of Russia. Many foreigners who remained in Moscow, thinking they should be well received by their countrymen in the confederate army, met with barbarous treatment. Their houses, where they prepared to receive the French as honoured guests, were sacked, their wives and daughters insulted, and they were at last thankful to conceal themselves in cellars. On the 20th Napoleon returned to the Kremlin, and to some extent restored order. In the Foundling Hospital only the elder children had been sent to Vladimir, the rest remained under the superintendent Toutolmine, a privy councillor. Napoleon ordered the cavalry horses to be stabled in the churches as at Smolensko, and these children to be turned out to make room for his men. A surgeon, Desquenettes, reminded him of the opinion of posterity, and as this always influenced him, he allowed them to stay, though the building was filled with the French sick and wounded. For this remonstrance Desquenettes was liberated by Alexander when he was taken prisoner, and Toutolmine took charge of the French wounded when Napoleon left Russia.

On leaving Moscow, after some counter-marching, Kutuzov made his head-quarters at Taroutino, on the Kaluga road, but a strong body of cavalry escorted the regalia and other state treasures to Vladimir. The rearguard only remained five miles beyond the city, and aided by the peasants, who carried on a most successful guerilla warfare, took 1341 prisoners in

the first week, and intercepted waggon-loads of silver, letters, and provisions on their way to the French army, till Napoleon began to feel himself a prisoner more than a conqueror. The new recruits were also gathering round Moscow, so that his people could not advance in safety a mile out of the city. He waited vainly for an answer from Alexander to the letter Toutolmine sent into the Russian lines, and his officers laid bets as to which of the two would hold out the longest. They pressed for a speedy retreat, but Napoleon would listen to nothing but a march on St. Petersburg if Alexander did not reply, though provisions were absolutely needed before he could proceed to the north. He sent for a young man named Yakovlef (detained in Moscow by an invalid uncle), whose brother had been Russian envoy at Jerome's Court, and bitterly complained of the war, which he said ought to be a political not a social one, and its scene in Lithuania not Moscow. One or two battles might have decided it, and a treaty by no means onerous re-established the Russo-French alliance; it was time, in the interests of humanity, and of Russia herself, to put an end to these horrors.* "Italy," he angrily added, "is the only place where I burned a town, because there they defended the streets. It is yourselves who burned Moscow—holy Moscow, where the ashes of your sovereigns repose. I must put an end to this campaign. What reason have I to mix myself up in Russia? It is England I want. If I were master of London, I would not quit it so soon. My troops press me to lead them to St. Petersburg. I have only to go there, and it will share the fate of Moscow. If Alexander wishes peace, it will be quickly concluded. You shall only leave Moscow on condition that you go to St. Petersburg, see Alexander, and relate what has passed." Yakovlef said he had no right to ask for an audience. Napoleon insisted. "See Count Tolstoi, he is a brave man; or even tell a groom of the chamber to announce you; or better still, accost him during his daily walk." But Yakovlef said, if his life depended on it he dare not address his Majesty

* The French shot down the peasants without discrimination; and in a letter to Berthier the day before he left Moscow, Napoleon ordered ten Russians, unfortunate sick found in a cellar, to be shot.

on the subject, so Napoleon wrote a letter dated September 20th, and sent it by him.

“SIRE, MY BROTHER,—Hearing that the brother of your Majesty’s minister at Cassel was at Moscow, I sent for him and talked for some time. I recommended him to acquaint your Majesty with my sentiments. The handsome and superb town of Moscow exists no more. Rostopchine burned it; 400 incendiaries were arrested in the fact; all declared they set fire to it by order of the Governor and of the director of the police. They were shot. The fire seems at last to have ceased. Three-quarters of the houses are burned; a quarter remains. This conduct is atrocious, and without an object. Has it for a motive to deprive us of our resources?—but those resources were in the cellars that the fire could not reach. Besides, why destroy one of the most beautiful towns in the world, and the work of centuries, to attain so poor an object? It is this conduct that reduced 600,000 families at Smolensko to beggary. The pumps of the town of Moscow are broken or carried away; part of the arms at the arsenal given to the malefactors, who obliged us to fire some cannon shot on the Kremlin to hunt them out. Humanity, the interests of your Majesty and of this great town, wills that it should become my head-quarters, since the Russians uncovered it. They ought to have left the administration there, the magistrates and civil guards. This is what was done at Vienna, twice at Berlin, at Madrid; it was thus we ourselves acted at Milan on the entrance of Suvorov. The incendiary authorizes pillage, to which the soldier gives himself up to dispute the *débris* with the flames. If I supposed such things were done by your orders, I would not write this letter; but I hold it impossible, that with your principles, your heart, and just ideas, you authorized such excesses, unworthy of a great sovereign and of a great nation. I have made war on your Majesty without animosity. A letter from him before or after the last battle would have stopped my march, and I would even have sacrificed for him the advantage of entering Moscow. If your Majesty still preserves for me any remains of your old feeling, you will take this letter in good part, and only con-

sider it as a proof of my good-will, to have given an account to you of what has passed at Moscow. On this I pray God to have your Majesty in His holy keeping.

“NAPOLEON.”*

Yakovlef arrived at St. Petersburg, and sent this letter by Aratchaief to Alexander, who refused to see the messenger, lest it should be reported he had opened negotiations. He returned no answer. Napoleon grew very impatient. He sent for Toutolmine and desired him to represent to the Empress-mother† that he had spared the Foundling Hospital, of which she was the patroness, as he held her in great esteem, and for the sake of Russia more than for himself was now anxious for peace. As a last resource he thought of despatching Caulaincourt to St. Petersburg. He told him he was going to march there; he knew its destruction must give him great pain. Russia would rise against Alexander; there would be a conspiracy, and the Czar would be assassinated, a most unfortunate circumstance. He esteemed him, and should regret him for his own sake and that of France, as no prince could replace him with such advantage to her. To prevent it he thought of sending Caulaincourt, who was to beg the Emperor to solicit peace; the credit of France would be saved, for she would deign to grant it. But Caulaincourt refused, as it would be of no use. Alexander would not listen so long as the Russian territory was not evacuated, knowing also the advantage the season of the year gave him. It would be injurious to French interests, for it would show their own embarrassment and need of peace. Napoleon said he would send Lauriston, who added fresh objections, and advised a retreat that very day by Kaluga. Napoleon said he would not return without peace. He showed them his letter assuring Alexander he still had the greatest affection for him; the war was produced by evil-disposed persons who caused a misunderstanding, and his proposals for peace were only to save his friend from the barbarity of his own people, who would sooner or later revenge their losses

* It is needless to say this letter is very incorrect in its numbers.

† Domergues, a French resident in Moscow, affirms in his work on its occupation, that Napoleon wrote himself to the Dowager-Empress, but this is not stated elsewhere.

upon their Sovereign. He told Lauriston to obtain from Kutuzov a safe conduct to St. Petersburg. "I want peace," he said; "I must have peace, it is absolutely necessary to me, only save my honour."*

The Russian army was greatly depressed, and to revive its spirits by inspiring it with a desire of revenge, Kutuzov spread the report that the French burned Moscow. The effect was magical, as the conflagration was distinctly seen, for the gale carried the ashes thirty-five miles; the militia returned to their colours, only anxious to be led against the French. Arms and provisions also flowed in, and 110,000 men and 50,000 horses received full rations. The reinforcements and supply of the assembling army was one of the greatest efforts of national zeal ever made. One advantage derived from the campaign of 1807 was, that Alexander had fully seen the inefficiency of his commissariat and hospitals, and since striven to remedy them. The wounds the Russians received and survived, and their fortitude in bearing amputations was a matter of astonishment to the French, and also to the foreign officers serving in the Russian camp.

After the battle of Czernicia, October 4th, which Murat allowed was a Russian victory, a neutral ground was established on which he was particularly fond of parading himself, and his gay dress and fine horse attracted even the Cossacks. By this means Lauriston obtained access to Kutuzov, and almost persuaded the old general to let the French army quietly retreat out of Russia, and save further bloodshed, though he dared not disobey Alexander by granting the request for an armistice. Wilson at Benningsen's request exposed Kutuzov's design to Alexander, while Kutuzov also wrote to complain of Benningsen having talked to Murat. The Emperor, though annoyed at these fresh disputes, wisely did not alter the command, or allude to information received from any other than his own aide-de-camp, but he wrote to the chief:—

“(October 4th, o.s.)

“PRINCE MICHAEL ILARIONOVICZ,—Your report by Prince Volkonski acquaints me with your interview with General

* Although one of the peace party, Volkonski brought word to the Emperor that Napoleon would find it very difficult to get out of Moscow.

Lauriston. When I confided my armies to you, I informed you of my wish to avoid all negotiations with the enemy, and all relations with him tending to peace. I repeat, that I desire this principle to be observed to its fullest extent, and most inflexibly. I learned to my extreme displeasure that General Benningsen had an interview with the King of Naples. I require from yourself a severe superintendence; to prevent the generals from holding similar conferences with the enemy. All the opinions you have received from me should satisfy you that my resolution was unalterable, and that now no proposal of the enemy can induce me to close the war and neglect the sacred duty of avenging my injured country.

“ALEXANDER.”

A recent incident had perhaps irritated the Marshal, and induced him to risk the Emperor's honour and save himself the fatigue of a prolonged campaign. The most ferocious of Paul's assassins, banished since 1801 to his estates, now weary of idleness, and anxious to take a part in the war, wrote to Kutuzov as soon as he heard of his appointment, asking him to restore him to active life by making him his aide-de-camp. Kutuzov did so, and received this letter from Alexander. “The capital of the empire is taken, the enemy is in the heart of Russia, but I am yet Emperor, and I cannot conceive how you have dared to bring Prince T. out of exile. Let him be sent back and subjected to the surveillance of the local police.”

Bagration was an immense loss, for his opinion weighed with Kutuzov more than any other general's, but there was a system in the Marshal's action which has met with some support. In the course of his diplomatic and military life, extending to within seven years of Peter I., he had seen that France, England, Austria, Prussia, and Sweden were agreed on this point if on nothing else—their fear and jealousy of Russia. They implored her aid, but none would render it to her if she needed it, or would not rejoice at her fall. Austria's conduct at Austerlitz, and Prussia's before Tilsit, enraged him against them, and now both attacked Russia, when a united resolve on their part to remain neutral would have prevented the war. He would not sacrifice another soldier for the deliverance of

either nation, for nothing could be more advantageous to Russia than their present position as discontented French vassals. Like many Russian nobles, he had suffered in his fortunes from the seizure of Russian merchantmen in 1807, before England received the formal declaration of war; and she might be more troublesome to Russia than France could ever be alone. Napoleon's Government was sufficiently arbitrary to satisfy the greatest lover of despotism, and he had suppressed republicanism. The present war had proved to him that he could not subdue Russia, and he had alienated the Poles, whom he would now gladly yield, with part of Prussia, to Alexander if his credit could be saved by being allowed to escape from Moscow. He would spread false accounts of the campaign, and the cause of the peace, but that would not hurt Russia, who knew the truth and might exact most favourable terms. Why should Russia do England's work, and effect the object which for years she had sacrificed her commerce to obtain? Had she merited such service? Kutuzov preferred an entirely selfish policy; the whole Continent had broken its engagements with Russia, let Russia merely arrange with France what best suited herself.

With such sentiments nothing could be more unfortunate than the presence of English officers, when inclined to interfere in military operations, to give advice, and to consider the lives of Russians as of no value compared to the destruction of an equal number of French. An officer who could write that, "happily for Russia and the world, Moscow had been consumed," and pressed the Emperor to give up his advantages in Turkey, was likely to be suspected by an old Muscovite; and unconsciously he used the very argument for Kutuzov's view, when he urged that Russia ought to capture Napoleon "for the sake of Europe."

Wilson had sent to inform the Austrians that the report of an armistice was untrue, when it would have been much to the interest of Russia to allow them to remain under that delusion, as they were superior to the force opposed to them, and had caused heavy losses to the Russians in magazines; and when Benningsen, a Hanoverian, took his part, Kutuzov thought he was also in English pay, and became as strongly influenced

by jealousy of his lieutenant, as by policy in restraining the advance of the Russians on the French.*

"I do not care for your objections," was his reply, when pressed on one occasion by Wilson to continue the offensive; "besides, I will say again as I have told you before, that I am by no means sure the total destruction of Napoleon and his army would be a benefit to the world; his succession would fall to that State which already commands the sea, and whose tyranny would then be intolerable."

Napoleon thought an answer to his letter to Alexander might arrive by October 20th. He told his generals it was a mistake to think he had nothing to do but to march. He must first obtain provisions.† Moscow was also a political position, and if he left it without making peace Europe would call it a flight. He still lingered, hoping to hear from Alexander, his only chance of withdrawing with credit; though the French admit that the foreigners in Moscow even exaggerated the severity of the Russian winter, which was more than a fortnight behind its time; and he thought of fortifying the Kremlin, which, if he could have provisioned it, would have accommodated his diminished force. He gave orders to pull down some of the churches, particularly the

* "The capture of Moscow," wrote Wilson to Constantinople, Vienna, and London, immediately after that catastrophe, "is but the prelude to the destruction of the captors, and the triumph of Russia. With the means of such an empire, with the spirit of such a people, with the example and energy of such a Sovereign, with such a basis as this valorous and faithful army provides, ultimate victory cannot be matter of doubt or of long delay." He afterwards added, "if the Marshal wills it."

A letter was intercepted to Murat at Vilna, from Napoleon, October 16th, 1812, which, after ordering more troops to be sent, particularly from Prussia, desires him "to point out to the King that his own interest should urge him to activity in collecting reinforcements, because the sooner this great struggle is over, the sooner he will be released from the necessary anxiety and restrictions attendant upon it. It is also good policy to show Russia, that owing to the great military resources we possess, not only in our States, but in those of our allies, his hope of wasting away our army by degrees is illusory. Use the same arguments to Austria, to Bavaria, to Stuttgart—indeed they will do everything I desire them—not only to send their reinforcements, but I charge them to exaggerate the number they send, let double the number be given out. I suppose you understand the Prussian corps at Memel are not to be reckoned amongst the reinforcements."

"I pray God to have you in His holy keeping. Napoleon."

† Wilson. The French army was already reduced to eat cats and horseflesh.

"Mosque," as he called the church of St. Basil, and had a room fitted up in the Kremlin for theatrical performances; an Italian singer and a few actresses, once attached to a nobleman's palace, thankfully gave their services for food and protection. The statement is erroneous that he brought a troupe from France. He sent to Kutuzov to find out if he had heard from the Czar, and then, as his army must perish of starvation if he stayed, and was fast diminishing from the attacks of the Cossacks, he gave orders for the retreat. On the 18th Sebastiani and Murat were defeated near Taroutino, with the loss of three generals, 4000 men, an eagle, 38 pieces of cannon, 40 tumbrils, and even Murat's silver canteens;* and this showed the French that they could not hope to force Kutuzov's position and retire towards the fertile provinces of the south-west; though they still expected to proceed partly along the Kaluga road to Smolensko, and avoid the ruined district through which they had advanced. Rapp said it was too late, winter would overtake them on the road; but Napoleon owned their position was becoming untenable; they must winter at Smolensko. During six weeks his letters had been intercepted, and he could not tell what had occurred in Paris. He gave orders to strip the interior of the unconsumed churches, and carry everything away that would do for a trophy. It required long efforts to remove the gigantic gilt cross from the steeple of Ivan Veliki, intended to adorn the dome of the Invalides in Paris. The tattered banners taken from the Tartars in former times were abstracted from the arsenal, and many other national relics. Napoleon left Moscow with his Guards and the Poles on the 19th, but Mortier with his division remained till the 23rd, to make a show of fortifying the Kremlin, which he was to evacuate secretly, having first undermined it, particularly the old palace, and to destroy anything else left unconsumed. "It is impossible," says the Duke of Wellington,† "to advert to this fact without expressing the horror it inspires. If Napoleon

* Desprez, writing to Joseph Bonaparte in Spain, says, "I arrived at Moscow on the evening of October 18th. The Emperor had just heard that the advanced guard under the command of the King of Naples had been attacked and forced to retreat with only part of their artillery."

† Correspondence for 1825.

had destroyed a magazine or a work of utility to the Russian army or nation, or even a monument of art, &c., the reader would not have been so shocked as by formal instructions to destroy the ancient palace of the Czars, solely to mask the impotent desire of revenge, because the Emperor of Russia, having declined to submit to insult, had afterwards refused to listen to insidious offers of peace. . . . Then we read of the complaints of the French nation of the occupation of their capital and of the contribution they were obliged to pay."

The mines, fired by slow-consuming fusees, greatly injured the palace; the walls of the arsenal, three yards in thickness, and one of the churches were thrown down, and the explosion was heard by the army already ten leagues out of Moscow. It was the more barbarous, as these buildings were filled with French sick and stragglers not strong enough to bear the march, and a further proof that the gratification of private revenge was more dear to Napoleon than the safety of the wretched beings who perished by *his own* gunpowder, 1800 miles from their native land. The general of the Cossacks showed great kindness to the survivors whom he rescued, and who were carefully tended in the Russian hospitals; for much mischief was prevented by their early arrival, turning Mortier's retreat into a flight; and they emptied the mines, which contained enough powder to have shivered every stone in the city to fragments. About 1300 out of 2000 desperately wounded Russians, left by Rostopchine with a concealed supply of food when he evacuated Moscow, were found still living, but almost starved to death. Half were saved, and supported during a year at Alexander's expense. The French retreating army numbered 140,000, including non-combatants, and was followed by many of the foreign residents. Directly their departure was known, the Archbishop Augustine and his clergy returned and held an expiatory service. The militia from Vladimir came next, and began to cleanse the city, for nearly every house had a well crammed with French corpses; and aided by the sums forwarded from St. Petersburg an effort was made to restore it. The Holy Synod sent 3,500,000 roubles for the churches, and a sum voted in the House of Parliament was carried unanimously. The disorders almost unavoidable after so large a population had been turned adrift,

broke out in Moscow when the heroism of the people was no longer sustained by the neighbourhood of the enemy, and nothing remained for them but the remembrance of their losses and a return to ordinary life. They attacked the houses of the foreigners who had stayed, accusing them of assisting the French; and some of the militia turned brigands rather than follow their old occupations. The ruins concealed them, and the police were accused of being in their pay. Rostopchine imprisoned several citizens said to have supplied the enemy with bread; and so many complaints against him reached Alexander, that he sent Balachof and two commissioners to inquire into their origin. The governor was in no mood for treating those who came to interfere in his province with much courtesy, and he ordered them away. An incident before the battle of Borodino was brought up against him, when a young Russian who had translated a paragraph from a Hamburg paper predicting Napoleon's triumph, at a moment when the governor was striving to calm the popular fears, was allowed to be murdered by the mob, on the day the army quitted Moscow. His father even refused him his blessing; but as time went on, he began to think his son unjustly sacrificed, and following Alexander to Vilna, he threw himself sobbing at his feet, spoke of his childless old age, and his wealth without an heir, and begged there might be an inquiry to clear his son's memory from the reproach of being a traitor. Alexander desired the old man to rise, and tried to console him with the assurance that he did not believe in his son's disloyalty; but, as he was still unappeased, the inquiry he requested was made, while the Czar proceeded with his army into Germany and France. Rostopchine said the murder was accidental, for the excitement of the people was too great to be restrained; but owing to his treatment of the commissioners their report was unfavourable, and he resigned his post in 1814. When the campaign, pursuing a weary length, ended in the capture of Paris, Moscow and her people impoverished by their patriotism became almost forgotten; and ungrateful Europe,* more jealous of the Russians than of Na-

* "What have we done for this people?" said Lord Wellesley, when recapitulating the gallantry of the Russian nation. "We have sent them some guns, and then Lord Cathcart and Lord Walpole." The last was ordered to Vienna under the idea that her Court was more hostile to Napo-

pooleon, was inclined to dispute their laurels, so that they seemed to have gained no advantage by the struggle, but only to have unchained a host of foreign enemies. Then the nobles and citizens of Moscow began to murmur at its destruction. Was it necessary? Had not enough been left to preserve the enemy, who had again collected as large an army as the one he left mouldering under the snow? To silence these strictures, which might lead to a criticism of the Imperial policy, those left in the Emperor's absence to guard the empire spared no pains to convince the people that Moscow was burned by the French.

Alexander thought the loss of Moscow might have been prevented by a different movement of the army, but he never blamed Rostopchine, or gave any reason to suppose he did not thoroughly appreciate the governor's patriotism.* All agree that if the French had been left to enter it unconsumed, or had taken it by assault, a disorganized mass of 150,000 hungry men would have done as much mischief as the flames. The sums Napoleon meant to levy there to pay for the whole campaign, and the cost of feeding his army during the winter months, would have exhausted its supplies equally with the Russian mode of prosecuting the war. He attributed his misfortunes entirely to the fire. "Who could have thought a nation would burn its own capital? Had it not been for that, I had everything my army wanted—excellent winter quarters, stores of all kinds, and the next year would have decided it. Alexander

leon than was afterwards proved; but as he was not received, he went on to St. Petersburg.

* Wolzogen relates that in Berlin, in 1816, he heard Rostopchine asked, Who burned Moscow? He replied, "The Emperor Alexander has never put that question to me, and I do not feel bound to answer it to any one else." His nerves became completely shattered. At night he thought himself amid the flames of Moscow, and haunted by pale phantoms who crept from under his bed, till he dreaded sleep as he dreaded ennui, and tried to divert his thoughts by literary labours. After a long sojourn at Baden, Carlsbad, and other places, he took the precaution before returning to Moscow, to write a pamphlet called "The Truth as to the Conflagration," where he explained that he was not the especial author of it, but that the citizens and nobility applied the torch to their own dwellings and magazines rather than that they should feed and shelter the French. It was no new system of military tactics among the Russian people; but their patriotism and self-devotion had never perhaps met with so tremendous a demand. It was employed more than once in their wars with the Tartars, and has since been repeated in the Crimea.

would have made peace, or I should have been at St. Petersburg. Oh, it was the most grand, the most sublime and terrific sight the world ever beheld.”* He repeated to Las Cases, that a peace at Moscow should have ended all his wars; yet among the official papers found in Maret’s house at Vilna, were maps and plans of the route to India, and a list of the intended terms of peace with Russia, including a new declaration of war with England, and a joint invasion of India by the Russian and French troops.

The Russian commissioners authorized to make a return of the national losses to the Government, for compensation, stated them at 321,000,000 roubles in the province and city of Moscow. Rostopchine refused to accept a kopek, though his town house contained the second library in the empire, and Voronovo with all its treasures was valued at 100,000*l*. The last explosion in the Kremlin threw down the celebrated belfry of St. Ivan, of which the bells, melted into one, were again suspended in 1819, “on account,” as the inscription runs, “of the happy termination of dreadful and bloody wars, and on occasion of the solid peace of all Europe, being recast from those of 1710, blown up by the enraged enemy when, with twenty other nations, he precipitated himself on Russia.”

* “I asked,” writes O’Meara, “if he thought he could entirely subdue Russia?” “No,” he replied; “but I would have caused Russia to make such a peace as suited France. Millions,” he said at the time, “have no doubt slipped through our hands, but how many thousand millions is Russia losing! Her commerce is ruined for a century to come. The nation is thrown back fifty years; this of itself is an important result. So violent a shock must convulse the throne of Alexander and force him to sue for peace. . . . Moscow has disappeared,” he said again to Las Cases at St. Helena, “and who can number the riches devoured there? Picture to yourself Paris with the accumulation of centuries of works and of industry. Its capital during the fourteen centuries it has existed, has increased by a million a year. Add to that the shops, the bank, the union of sciences, arts, business, and commerce, all established, and all that has disappeared in a moment. I do not think that two milliards could re-establish it.”

CHAPTER V.

1812—1813.

THE FRENCH RETREAT AND THE RUSSIAN PURSUIT.

ETAT. 34—35.

“THE Emperor of Russia,” writes the Duke of Wellington,* “appears to have taken every measure which could tend to the total defeat and destruction of his enemy. He took no notice of the insinuations made to him of Napoleon’s love for him personally, except to censure the officer who conveyed them. He reinforced his army most judiciously, and particularly those destined to act upon the flanks of the enemy, and his orders† for the recommencement of their

* Correspondence for 1825.

† *To Admiral Tchichagof.*

“From Ostrog march on Pinsk. Arrive there by October 7th.

“One of the principal objects of the operations is to cover your march by the corps lately under Tormassof, and to gain some marches on Regnier and Schwartzenberg in your march from Pinsk to Neswige and Minsk; that arriving at Minsk before them, you may prevent their junction with the main army on its retreat. Reach Neswige by October 13th at latest—sooner if possible.

“Establish communication by October 15th with the army lately under Tormassof; reinforce it if necessary, to enable it to push Schwartzenberg and Regnier out of the Duchy of Warsaw into Galicia.

“On October 21st, or sooner if possible, occupy with your principal force Minsk, where you will be joined the same day by the detachment from Mozyr; then occupy Borisov and the course of the Beresina; form an entrenched camp, securing all the woods and defiles on the road from Borisov to Bobr.

“Fortify all points defensible, so that the enemy pursued by our main army may be checked at every step in his retreat.

“On October 7th you will be reunited by your left at Dokchitzky with Wittgenstein; assure the communication with Kiow by your right.

“Forming thus the centre of three united armies, with a fourth in reserve at Vilna, under Steingel, you will hold yourself in readiness for any unforeseen opportunities that may offer to annihilate the enemy, whether on the left or on the right side of the Oula, whether in your centre at Borisov and on the Beresina, or on your right flank at Bobruisk.

“Our united armies must act with the greatest promptitude and activity in the centre and on the flanks at any and every point where-soever the enemy may present himself, to prevent any portion of his main army from escaping, and even its couriers and spies from gliding through

operations after the juncture of the reinforcements at the same period of the month of October are most judicious." These orders were to Tchichagof and Wittgenstein to meet at the marshes of the Dwina, and intercept the retreating army when, with Kutuzov in its rear, its destruction seemed inevitable. Steingel and Tormassof were to keep the Prussians and Austrians in check on the flanks, Steingel having landed at Revel, September 9th, with the Finland army, though a corps was unhappily wrecked in a fearful storm which swept the shores of the Baltic. The plan was gigantic even in that age of military exploits, considering the ground each army crossed to effect the desired union. Alexander* and his council acted

the posts, so that, exhausted by marches and fatigues, it may be entirely destroyed before reaching the frontier."

To Count Steingel.

"If the troops assembling at Tilsit do not compel different measures, march through the governments of Vilna on Vidzy and Svenziany, where you should arrive by October 15th. Press on Oudinot, defeated by Wittgenstein, and push him beyond the Vilia and the Niemen. Defend the Niemen against the Prussians; cover Riga, and act as a reserve to the three armies when united at Minsk and on the Beresina."

To Count Wittgenstein.

"Attack Polotzk in the rear; then unite with Prince Tashvil at Duna-burg; fall on Oudinot with the greatest rapidity; cut him off from the main army; throw him on Steingel, who about that time, after defeating Macdonald, will have reached Vidzy and Svenziany, and give him up the command to pursue the enemy.

"Having executed the above orders, reach Dokchitz by the 27th October, open communications through Minsk with Tchichagof, pass the Beresina, occupy Lepel and the whole course of the Oula from Beresina to its confluence with the Dwina. Fortify all defiles on any and every road the enemy may take after passing the Dnieper."

Wittgenstein was reinforced by October 8th with 11,000 of the militia of St. Petersburg, 9000 of the Finland soldiers, and 8000 of the Novgorod Militia. Tormassof also received instructions to commence offensive operations (October 8th) against Schwartzberg, with a view to drive his force from the environs of Neswige and Pinsk, and leave the line of the Beresina clear for Tchichagof and Wittgenstein, while they approached from the north and south at the same time in the same direction.

* "Notwithstanding his philosophical principles, he resumed to the letter the autocracy still indispensable to Russia, but not necessarily the same thing as despotism. In this country experience has taught the sovereigns that their security depends on their personal application to business. To see everything and give all decisive orders without the intervention of a minister, such is the rude task they have felt it their duty to assume, though the accomplishment exacts almost superhuman strength. It should excite universal sympathy when a monarch (like Alexander II. at the present day) does not fear to wear out his strength and his life in devoting himself to this task."—Schnitzler's *La Russie en 1812*.

as the centre, and sent to each general information of the progress of his colleagues. They were occupied day and night in business connected with the war, till at the end of three months the Emperor had become bald and grey, and was more worn by watching the operations from a distance than by the following year's hard campaign.

There was still a naïve belief in Napoleon's bulletins, and these spread glowing accounts of his success in France. Andrassy's agents in Persia and India translated them for the benefit of the Arabs and Persians, and the last supposing they were assisting to complete Russia's ruin, pushed on the war in Georgia till they were totally defeated on the Araxes (October 19th, 1812), and deprived of the Khanate of Talisch. These disasters induced the Shah to solicit peace, which was signed at Gulistan (October 12th, 1813), ceding the boundary of the Araxes to Russia.

But if Western Europe was temporarily deceived, and the chief of the British Opposition foretold that Napoleon would reach St. Petersburg before Lord Cathcart, the truth began to spread in the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, which out of only 4,000,000 people had supplied 85,000 men to the Grand Army, and was now called upon for more recruits. The French borrowed 400,000,000 francs from the municipality of Warsaw, which contracted debts to provide it, and has never been repaid to this day. The most wealthy proprietors were impoverished to meet their demands. The Czartoriski family retired to Vienna, yet the French imposed new taxes without result, and their levies crossed the country, pillaging the farms, till many peasants were actually starved to death.

This state of things induced Adam Czartoriski to write to Alexander from Vienna, October 9th, ostensibly to express surprise at having received no answer to letters written in August asking to be released from all pledge or tie to Russia, and stating his adhesion to Warsaw, but also to suggest a plan for the future of Poland. He told the Czar his alarm for his personal safety formed a great part of the distress of every kind by which he was assailed, and adds in a postscript: "If ever you think, Sire, of making peace, and can only obtain it by great sacrifices, would not a brilliant establishment in Poland for the youngest of the Grand Dukes be a means of

rendering it more easy and more honourable? The benefit to the Continent of a general peace, even if it only lasted a short time, would be incalculable," &c.

By Alexander's orders Kutuzov marched from Tarautino to Malo Jaroslavitz, the strongest point on the new road from Moscow to Kaluga, as soon as he heard of the French retreat, to compel them to pass along the barren path of ruin to Smolensko, which the Emperor supposed they would naturally avoid. The town was hotly contested, and when actually burning so as to be no longer tenable, the Russian army* moved on Napoleon's intended line of march, and instead of offering to dispute it he gave orders to retreat by Viazma and Mojaïsk. He must have known what it entailed, when he decided to go back 260 miles through the country he had wasted till it now offered no shelter or supply against the inclemency of the weather and the pressure of famine, and it was decidedly the battle of Malo Jaroslavitz which obliged him to do it. He passed over the field of Borodino (October 28th), where the French, so inured to horrors, still saw with consternation the unburied remains of 30,000 men, some half eaten by wolves and birds of prey, and a living Frenchman among them supported for two months on biscuits from the knapsacks of the dead. The convent of Kolotskoi was like a charnel house, and though Napoleon† ordered the surviving wounded to follow the army in baggage carts, the drivers threw them out to die on the side of the road. What else could be expected from the rank and file after the example set by their chief, who, deprived of a means of vengeance in burning new towns, directed that all the forests and corn still left here should be destroyed as they passed, and 2000

* "Your Majesty's plan has been carried out," Kutuzov wrote to Alexander, "and the enemy are forced to retrace their steps by the former route." Wilson accuses the old general of acting with unpardonable dilatoriness, but at any rate he achieved his object. The nobility of Kaluga were so thankful for the preservation of their province that they offered to mention his name in the Church services immediately after the Czar.

† When he saw the field of Borodino he tried to shift the responsibility of the campaign on to others; "he had, in fact," he said, "dreaded this war, and devoted its author to the execrations of the whole world. It was —— whom he accused (Ségur does not give the name), that Russian minister sold to the English, who had drawn into it both Alexander and himself."—Ségur.

Russian prisoners, chiefly peasants, were shot or shut up in enclosures and left to starve? A few were found in a miserable state by the pursuers, and the rest, with their brains blown out, strewed the way. In vain Caulaincourt represented the French were leaving their own prisoners and many wounded to the Russian mercy. What could they expect for them if this was the civilization they introduced into Russia?

Napoleon still boasted that he would march on St. Petersburg the next spring, after wintering at Smolensko, and exact a horrible retribution for his forced retreat; but his army was continually harassed by Miloradovitz and the Cossacks, who even endangered his personal safety. He afterwards said he always had a sufficiently strong guard to secure himself from capture, and he was certainly never more exposed than he could avoid.* In fact, many battalions of his rearguard were unhesitatingly sacrificed to secure his flight. No one of his enemies ever retired in more haste or more disorder than Napoleon now fled before the Cossacks.

The French under Prince Eugene were driven out of Viazma, November 4th, by Miloradovitz, and Benningsen pressed Kutuzov to allow the main army to engage them after they had suffered a heavy loss. He replied, he only wished to see the enemy out of Russia; the cold would effect that without risking a single soldier; he did not care if Germany belonged to England or France. He would not give one Russian for six Frenchmen. An indignant Englishman thinking the war might be finished for ever on that spot, sent a courier with his fourth or fifth letter of complaints against Kutuzov to Alexander. The worn-out old man saw no reason for sacrificing more of the human species if it was only to satisfy the spirit of vengeance, for which he must answer so soon in another world. He said the campaign was over at Malo Jaroslavitz. The admiral would meet the enemy at the Beresina, and prevent him from crossing it. Why kill men who must soon die of themselves? "I escort the French army, my prisoners; I chastise it when it wishes to stop or get off the high road. The term of Napoleon's authority is irrevocably fixed." Even the Cossacks said: "Are we to leave these skeletons to come out of their tombs?"

* Also De Maistre.

The French were now living on horseflesh, and had heard of the Russians having taken Vitepsk and Polotzk, so as to cut off their communications with Vilna and Smolensko. Nevertheless, the Cossacks and the danger of starvation pushed them on, recklessly burning every town as they were chased from it, leaving their wounded to perish in its flames. On November 7th the frost began, and winter assumed her sway with the rapidity characteristic of the north.*

"It is curious," says Wellington, "to observe the use made of this event in all these accounts, particularly by Gourgaud, Napoleon's apologist. First the frost was premature and earlier in that season than it had ever been known in others. This is not the fact, but what is the fact is, that an early frost was foreseen, and the necessity of guarding against this state of the season urged in the 23rd and 24th bulletins in the midst of all the boasting which those documents contain. Any other people in the world after reading these words, written on the 9th, 14th, and 20th of October, would have been astonished that the famous 29th bulletin of December 3rd should have attributed the misfortunes of this army to the frost. Then we are told the loss (in horses) was occasioned because the French horses were not rough-shod. Why were they not rough-shod? Is there never any frost in France? But the excuse is not founded in fact. Those who have followed a French army well know that their horses are always rough-shod. It is the common mode of shoeing horses in France, and in this respect a French army would have suffered less inconvenience than any other that ever was assembled."† Before the frost had fairly set in, all the horses were either killed for food or had died of overwork and starvation. Napoleon states, in a letter to Victor, that his cavalry were all on foot, November 7th. Horses can bear cold when properly fed, and if they had not been rough-shod there were farriers attached to the army. The whole male population of the province of the Don Cossacks was

* Wilson writes (November 1st), that so late a winter had never been known in Russia; and General Gourgaud says, that up to November 6th the weather was fine, and the cold much less than it was even in Spain in the mountains of Castile, when Napoleon made a winter campaign there in 1808.

† Wellington Correspondence for 1825.

called to arms, and were hovering on the wings of the French. It was the forced marches to escape them, and famine, which in reality destroyed the warriors who had traversed Germany with such confidence only six months before. A diet of diseased horseflesh, without bread or salt, and often a scarcity of even that disgusting fare, produced an internal complaint, rendering them perfectly incapable of supporting an amount of cold which under more favourable circumstances might have caused them no injury. The Spaniards and Italians bore it better than the Germans or Dutch, for they are accustomed to support life on a smaller amount of food. It is well known that Russians bear the extreme rigour of their own climate with less hardiness than the nations of the south and west. In the pursuit of the Grand Army they suffered severely from the cold, but were supplied with proper rations, which enabled a larger proportion of them to survive it. Who can read of the French soldiers in the retreat actually compelled to eat the flesh of their own companions* without hope of finding a morsel of bread along the road they had wantonly laid waste on their advance, and cannot see that if the weather had been as genial as in Madeira they were still dying of hunger, and the frost and snow which placed every obstacle in the enemy's pursuit was the only chance which enabled any of them to get back to France?

Napoleon made every attempt to rally and provision his troops, but the Jewish traders who swarmed over Lithuania and Poland were alienated by forged Russian notes† being passed off upon them at the beginning of the campaign, and would bring no more provisions to his camp, and several droves of cattle were captured on their way to his quarters. The baggage taken was of great value: one waggon full of gold and silver ingots, a military chest of 200,000 poods in specie, ten millions of francs, and Davoust's carriage with his marshal's staff and private correspondence. Wittgenstein took the remaining carriages of the French generals filled

* See Wilson and others. General Korff also mentioned that he had seen three Frenchmen who had eaten a man. The Neapolitans were in a light fantastic garb chosen by Murat.

† Yet he had money hoarded up in the Tuileries sufficient for the expenses of the war, which, if properly bestowed, might have saved the Grand Army.

with Church plunder (all of which he recovered), and much French gold, but Napoleon destroyed his own papers and personal effects, and buried the trophies he had reserved for the museums in Paris.

At Smolensko the French soldiers forced the doors of the magazines, and finding them empty, they became like demons. Every Russian prisoner was instantly shot; if any food was in their reach they turned their arms against each other, and fought for a place round the bivouac fires till blood was shed. Alexander gave a gold ducat for each prisoner brought in alive, to save useless bloodshed on the part of the peasants. Six days after the frost began the French entered ancient Poland, where, if properly treated, the people would have been their friends. But their miseries began long before: 350 cannon were abandoned, and the road strewn with dying horses, from which the drivers fed like the Abyssinians, without having had the humanity to shoot them first. What was left of Smolensko was undermined and blown up by Napoleon's orders as he quitted it, although containing 5000 of his sick and wounded. His Guards received spirits and supplies while the rest of the army was perishing, for the Guards must be kept in good preservation to protect him. It excited jealousy, but they repaid the care.*

One division of the French army at Krasnoe, including Napoleon and his Guards, was surrounded, and the Russians, feeling they had him in their grasp, shouted, "Moscow! Moscow!" and demanded an instant attack on the town. Kutuzov, afraid of a rebellion, promised it for the next morning, allowing the enemy twelve hours for retreat or for its detached corps to come up. But in the morning, though many had retreated, he suspended his order. The troops under Benningsen and Galitzin rushed upon a bewildered throng, of whom 26,000 men, two generals, forty-five guns, and two eagles were captured: but Kutuzov stoutly refused to allow the main army to attack the town, though it contained Napoleon and not 30,000 troops. To the English officers he replied, when pressed to allow

* Benningsen at Eylau shared the destitution of his army. Napoleon and his generals always secured their own personal comforts, and with reason, for the safety of all may depend on the commander being kept in the best state of health.

the war to be finished in one hour, "You had my answer at Malo Jaroslavitz."

Even Boutourlin, Kutuzov's champion, admits that he purposely delayed Tormassof's division from making the attack to give a free passage to Napoleon's force (and to Napoleon himself). Such compassion to an enemy almost amounts to contempt.

The news of a conspiracy in Paris increased Napoleon's anxiety to arrive there, his communications being constantly interrupted. He had boasted that he should dictate laws from Moscow both to France and to Russia, but the only order he gave there, unconnected with his army, was to the French dramatic corps. As he drew nearer to the frontier he was relieved by the provisions brought from Prussia, when not taken by the Cossacks, and reinforced by a strong German corps. Minsk, occupied by a Polish garrison, contained 2,000,000 rations, immense magazines of powder and guns, clothing, and forty days' supply of grain, cattle, beer, and spirits for 100,000 men. Its capture by the Russians was a fatal blow to the French. The weather had changed and there was a thaw, and Napoleon being well fed and clothed, unlike his men, seemed only invigorated by the cold; but the Russian flanks under Wittgenstein and Tchichagof were pressing fast upon him, and all his efforts could not make the retreat anything more than a disorderly flight.*

On December 1st Kutuzov sent Benningsen from the army a week after Constantine joined the advanced guard. "The prisoners assure me," wrote Tchichagof, "that the French are exasperated against Napoleon. We have taken many of his Guards. I have often occupied the same quarters he quitted a few hours before." The number of French captured obliged the soldiers to transfer them to the armed peasants, to be taken into the interior. These escorts halting at night in ruined villages had little shelter for themselves and none for their charges, who were often put in roofless outer buildings, where many died of the cold. As the prisoners increased and

* "I have acted the Emperor long enough," he said, as he left Krasnoe at full gallop at the head of his Guards, leaving Davoust's corps to be cut to pieces. "It is time I should become again General Bonaparte."

the Russians began to suffer from scarcity through carrying on a rapid pursuit over a country where the last remnant of fuel or forage was cleared by the flying enemy, they released all the German prisoners to find their way as well as they could to their homes. Tchichagof's advance had been rapid and skilful, though harassed by Schwartzenberg and Regnier, and most contradictory orders from Kutuzov. He detached a corps to keep Schwartzenberg back, proceeding towards the appointed rendezvous at the Beresina, towards which Wittgenstein was pressing, opposed by Oudinot and Victor, who had joined Napoleon. Kutuzov kept two marches distant, but on a parallel line with Napoleon, and Tchichagof with 32,000 men had to guard the right bank of the Beresina for sixty miles in fog and snow. Yet his vigilance kept the French uncertain for two days where they should cross, and Murat said they must no longer think of anything else but saving Napoleon.* This was effected by burning the bridges directly he had passed the river with his Guards, being hotly pursued. The French rearguard, with its cannon, pushed through a crowd of its own men, besides women and children, camp followers, and vivandières, trampling them down and upsetting numbers into the river. The sight is described as truly awful—the despair of the half-starved creatures when they saw they had been left behind. Many dashed into the river, and were crushed between blocks of floating ice. Nine Cossacks sprang among this crowd to secure the remains of the booty gathered throughout the Russian provinces, but there was no general massacre as is sometimes described; all was madness and confusion, and the bodies of 12,000 drowned or crushed by the French artillery reappeared when the thaw began, besides 2000 who surrendered themselves as prisoners on the spot.

The result of the union of the three Russian armies was awaited with great anxiety at St. Petersburg, and much disappointment felt at Napoleon's escape. "Tchichagof is much blamed," writes De Maistre; "it even escaped from his Majesty before a very small audience, 'The plan has failed;' but he did

* "As soon as Napoleon crossed the Beresina," De Maistre writes on December 29th, "he ordered the bridge to be broken, regardless of the people on the other side, though they were pointed out to him. He answered, 'What do those *crapauds* matter? Let them get out of the business as they like.'"

not criticise the admiral in particular." Cathcart is also inclined to blame Tchichagof, but Wellington attributes the failure more to Kutuzov, and so did Alexander, for not having reinforced Tchichagof, who was also misled (some think purposely) by the old general as to the point where the French meant to cross. But after pardoning both his foreign and domestic enemies, Alexander perhaps felt he could not be severe on the marshal, who, considering his infirmities, had undergone extraordinary fatigues; and if Kutuzov had permitted Napoleon to draw himself out of the toils, he had only followed the example of Peter I.,* who would not allow the fugitive Charles to be pursued after Pultova, conniving at his escape. But in this instance Kutuzov's conduct was ill-timed mercy, and produced another fourteen months of war.†

On December 5th Napoleon left his army at Smorgoni under Murat's command, and set off for Paris, not in an open sledge, as sometimes stated, but in his carriage, wrapped up in the rich furs Alexander gave him in their days of friendship. Caulaincourt was his sole companion inside, and, if intercepted, Napoleon was to take his name, professing to be bound on a

* See Coxe's *Russia* in 1779.

† "The plan," says Cathcart, "for the junction of Tchichagof and Wittgenstein at the Beresina, for the complete annihilation of the remains of Napoleon's army, and probably the capture of Napoleon himself, was planned by Alexander, and his aide-de-camp carried the order, but it failed from the neglect of Tchichagof to send out scouts to obtain the true position of the Grand Army, and his men arrived so completely exhausted that he allowed them to rest almost in the vicinity of Napoleon, who pressed on and crossed the river."

In the Duke of Wellington's essay on the war he observes "how little is known of the internal state of one hostile army by another; and it is not astonishing that Kutuzov, being aware of the numerical inferiority of his own force to his adversary, and of his own losses in the pursuit, should not have believed that the Guards, and those troops which had been the terror of the world, were unable to defend themselves against the reduced number he could bring against them." But if the Russian general could have known the real state of the enemy, and Kutuzov been a little more active, its total destruction was inevitable.

Sir Walter Scott writes to a friend, January 9th, 1813: "Let me congratulate you upon the renovated vigour of your fine old friends, the Russians. It is most famous this campaign of theirs. I was not one of those very sanguine persons who anticipated the actual capture of Bonaparte, a hope which rather proceeded from the ignorance of those who cannot conceive that military movements upon a large scale admit of such a force being accumulated upon any particular point, as may by abandonment of other considerations always insure the escape of an individual."

special mission to the Czar. A Polish captain, who acted as interpreter, sat outside with the valet, and Duroc and Lobau followed them in a sledge. Fifty Neapolitans formed their escort, and Napoleon's departure was kept profoundly secret. He arrived at Vilna the following evening, and told Maret his army did not exist—"for you cannot call a troop of stragglers wandering about for subsistence an army." When Maret pointed out the large magazines in Vilna, Napoleon sent orders to Murat to rest the army there, and "impress a new character on the retreat." He exchanged his heavy vehicle with a Pole for a lighter carriage, which could be placed on a sledge instead of wheels, and left for Warsaw, where he spoke of his losses with much levity to the Abbé Pradt, his ambassador, saying, "from the sublime to the ridiculous was but a step;" and asked for more Poles, as *he had not seen one in his army*, though the Abbé assured him there were 82,000. "The Russians have shown what they are," he added; "Alexander is beloved; they have clouds of Cossacks. It is something to have such an empire; the nobles are all on horseback. Who would have thought they would have struck such a blow as to burn Moscow? It would have done honour to ancient Rome," &c. At Dresden he saw the King of Saxony, and late on the night of the 18th entered the Tuileries to give his own version of his disasters, as not even his last bulletin had reached Paris. He described the campaign as most prosperous, everything going on as he had planned till the cold set in *long before the proper time*. Even the conflagration had not spoiled his prospects, but it was that convenient cause of everything—the weather; and as he warmed himself over the fire at the Tuileries he observed, "this was pleasanter than Moscow;" while his starving, almost naked, army was still struggling against the Cossacks and through the snow.

Two days after Napoleon left Smorgoni the last of the rear-guard, with twenty-five guns, fell into the hands of General Chaplitz. Between the Beresina and Vilna Kutuzov had to march over the route twice devastated by the Grand Army in severer weather than had been yet felt. Miloradovitz was laid up with a frozen eye, and every Russian was more or less a sufferer from the cold. But further warfare was needless. The French entered Vilna in such disorder that the town

looked as if already stormed, for they broke open the magazines, and fell, overcome with brandy and a full meal, after long exhaustion, in all parts of the city, their frozen corpses lying unheeded, while the rest hastily fled from it at the sound of the Cossacks.*

Every man of the division Ney originally commanded was either killed or taken prisoner, so that he may be truly said to have saved only himself. The men he rallied round him after December 7th were all Germans and Neapolitans, who came from Germany as a reinforcement during the retreat, and first entered on the campaign at its most disastrous moment. He left his last gun in the forest of Polwiski, as he was chased from the town of Kovno by Platof and the Cossacks.

Kovno was garrisoned by 300 Germans and a company of artillery, who under Ney, again bereft of his new rearguard, tried to make a stand. The German commander being wounded, took out a pistol and blew out his own brains. His men fled, and at Kovno, for the eighth time since the French left Moscow, they abandoned their sick and wounded to the enemy. It was now a *saue qui peut*; Ney, still the commander of the imaginary rearguard, reached Gumbinnen before Murat, the commander-in-chief; and it was only at Königsberg they were able to sleep without being haunted by the hurrahs of the Cossacks; indeed, the survivors said that for years afterwards their shouts were apt to intermingle with

* Berthier wrote to Ney, December 9th, at Murat's desire, from Vilna: "General Wrede has been forced in his position, and your succour, under Gratien, not enabling him to repulse the enemy, the King has removed his quarters to the barrier of the gate of Kovno. Continue to form a rearguard with the divisions of Wrede and Loison. Evacuate this night, if possible, all the artillery, and particularly the treasure. Under existing circumstances the King can do nothing but gain Kovno as expeditiously as possible. The King authorizes you to recommend our sick to the Russian commandant."—Berthier.

To Count Daru: "The King is at the barrier of Kovno. Ney will withdraw to-morrow as late as he can. Send off the treasure to-night. Distribute as abundantly as wished provisions and clothing, for Vilna cannot be held through to-morrow." At the same time Murat sent orders to Schwartzberg to retreat on Bialystock to cover Warsaw, and to Macdonald to fall back as leisurely as possible to Tilsit." Berthier wrote to Napoleon on December 14th: "Four-fifths of the army have feet, hands, or face frozen. Your Majesty can have no idea of the state of suffering into which the rigour of the cold has plunged the army; obliged for the last two months to make incessant forced marches, the remaining combatants scarcely suffice for an escort to protect the King, the generals, and the eagles."

their dreams. Tchichagof reached Smorgoni the day after the French left, but stragglers from the Grand Army, half-frozen skeletons, wandered round the Russian bivouacs at night, asking for bread and permission to warm themselves by the watch-fires. The excitement produced by success had alone enabled the Russians to support the fatigues of these incessant marches; they were often benumbed with cold, so that the same prisoners escaped more than once from their frozen hands. Ségur imagines they were actuated by compassion, or began to think themselves sufficiently avenged, for many behaved generously. But if they had relaxed in their pursuit, there was nothing to prevent the French from taking up their quarters at Vilna, for at the first place there was sufficient bread, flour, and meat to last 100,000 men for thirty-six days, and both at Vilna and Kovno they were close to the frontier, and could receive supplies in men and provisions from Germany. The extreme celerity of the Russians prevented the magazines being destroyed. The post-houses, large buildings like Eastern caravanserais, gave the French some shelter on the high road. More than once they set them on fire and threw themselves into the flames. "The retreat of the French," wrote Platof, "is a flight without example, abandoning everything, even to their sick and wounded. In two days within sight of my division they have blown up one hundred ammunition waggons in their despair, while the sudden movements of my troops made them leave an equal number untouched." One Russian prisoner was the sole capture of the whole Grand Army, and he remained with it till they reached Kovno. He was sent with a flag of truce to demand Ney's surrender near Orcha, when by some mistake the Russian batteries began to fire, and he was detained. The French placed him in the most exposed situations; he shared all their miseries during twenty-six days' captivity, and marched with them, only restrained by his parole. General Vinzingerode and his aide-de-camp, Narishkine, were taken in Moscow, through their imprudence in re-entering it alone before the French rearguard had left. Napoleon abused them, and ordered Vinzingerode to be shot, as he was a German, but his generals prevented such a breach of military law, though it was one the French constantly committed with regard to

men of inferior rank, and at Smolensko they were rescued by some Cossacks. Near this city a retired Russian colonel, Engelhart, fortified his own house, from which he harassed the French garrison till he was taken and shot. "Only those," said a Russian officer, writing to his relations at St. Petersburg, "who have witnessed such variations of human miseries as I have seen can form any idea of the horrors yet untold; of the hideous spectacles exhibited between the Beresina and the Niemen, a parallel is not to be found in the annals of the world." "I have marched 200 versts over corpses to Vilna," said another. "From Moscow to the front," wrote Xavier de Maistre to his brother, "is like a continual field of battle. I have seen houses where more than fifty corpses were collected, and amongst them three or four yet living men. A desert, where we only see snow, crows, wolves, and corpses. The prisoner dies of cold and hunger, or is killed by warmth and food. Monseigneur the Grand Duke Constantine brought some of these unfortunates into his own kitchen, giving orders that they should have every possible care; at the first spoonful of soup they died. Living for three months on carrion, and even men, for there is no doubt on this point, they exhale so fetid an odour that three or four are enough to render a house insupportable." "The immense quantity of bodies," writes De Maistre from St. Petersburg, "has justly drawn the attention of the Government. . . . At Borodino and in the neighbourhood 42,000 bodies of horses were counted. Directions are given to burn them, but wood is wanted; already on several sides malignant maladies have shown themselves, while the plague continues its ravages at Odessa. May God help us! The Emperor (Alexander), who arrived at Vilna on the 22nd, writes that he shall never forget all his life the horrible spectacle he has seen. He immediately charged M. le Comte de St. Priest, a French officer of the greatest merit in the service of Russia, with the general inspection of the prisoners, that they may do them as little ill and as much good as possible. There are about 200,000. The Emperor has given at Vilna a thousand proofs of goodness and of munificence. He said to the Polish seigneurs: 'Sirs, I have forgotten everything. We will pass a sponge over all that is passed. I hope only for the future. Where is Napoleon?



what will he do? What will England do, who fears Russia while making use of her? What will Spain do, who in four years of revolution has not yet produced any real civil or military talent, and whose constitution is only a work of lawyers?"

On November 27th a manifesto was read in the Russian churches to express gratitude to God, and the Czar's thanks to his people for the efforts of patriotic devotion which had led to the disorderly flight of the enemy. He left St. Petersburg for Vilna in the middle of the night of the 18th–19th of December, at the same hour in which Napoleon arrived at the Tuileries, and in more bitter weather, encountered in an open sledge, than any his rival had felt in Russia. Far from suffering from an unusually severe season, the observations of thirteen years showed the mean temperature of November in 1812 was much above the average. But the winter continued into the spring of 1813, greatly hindering the operations of the Allies. A month later the Beresina would have required no bridge; the French might have crossed it on the ice. Napoleon indeed saw but half the horrors* of the campaign. He hardly entered the town of Vilna as he pursued his flight, but rested for the night in the Kovno suburb. The spectacle of that charnel-house, and the disposal of the mass of suffering it contained, was left entirely to his adversary, whom it seriously hindered, but the French were far better cared for than if their own chief had taken up his quarters in the city.† Before Austerlitz,

* General Giraud and St. Cyr both say that Napoleon had long paid little more regard to the men than to the horses supplying his artillery. The conscripts were dragged along handcuffed or crowded together in carts, and read in the gazettes the transports they manifested in quitting their families to rally round the standards of honour. Once disabled, he was utterly indifferent to them; they perished in the hospitals, or, deprived of their uniforms, were clothed in some old rags bought from the Jews, and allowed to find their own way to their homes. Napoleon, after he became Emperor, never went into the hospitals, as he states himself, because his physician told him it was unwholesome, and it was disagreeable to him.

† Ségur. "This Sovereign's advent," says Wilson, "was a benefaction of Providence for the remaining survivors of the enemy. Every aid that possibly could be supplied was instantly administered to them, not merely by his orders, but under his own personal superintendence, in which work of benevolence he was zealously seconded by Constantine. Both braved infection, disease, horrible spectacles, and every accompanying danger and disgust in the discharge of these good offices. The hospital at St. Basil presented the most awful and hideous sight: 7500 bodies were piled

Alexander was made faint by the sight of the wounded, but like his ancestor's (Peter) fear of water, he had tried to master this feeling, till he could penetrate the dens of horror in Vilna to relieve his enemies, though even the most practised surgeon could not enter them without some ill effect. The wretched French fugitives continued to straggle in; many clothed in chasubles and altar covers to keep out the cold, haunting the streets like spectres, asking for bread; and the Cossacks carried about children who had lost their parents in the retreat, trying to find some one to take them. The Emperor picked up several Frenchmen on his road, and brought them into Vilna in his own sledge, leaving them with payment to the care of various residents in the suburbs, and he took many more out of the streets into the kitchen of his quarters, that they might be warmed and fed. He confided the French prisoners to their own officers till they left them to perish, spending the money given for their maintenance at the cafés. The worst form of typhus fever had already broken out, and Prince George of Oldenburg died of it two days before Alexander arrived, leaving the Grand Duchess Catherine a widow of twenty-four with two children. Constantine also caught it, and was brought to the verge of the grave. The air of the hospitals was at once icy and pestilential, but the Emperor went himself through all the wards to see that his orders were obeyed, in spite of the remonstrance of his officers, speaking the kindest and most judicious words of consolation to the inmates in their various tongues. Shortly afterwards all the Sovereigns, except Napoleon, whose subjects were ill at Vilna, sent money for their relief. Alexander visited the prisoners incognito, and was once recognized in a room full of officers; but, as he said, "was generally taken for St. Priest's aide-de-camp." The Poles wished to give a ball in his honour, but he declined it, as "any gaiety seemed most unsuitable at the present moment;" though he appeared at one Kutuzov held on his birthday, lest his absence should be misinterpreted. The medical authorities also advised amusement for the officers, to prevent a fatal depression in an infected city. In the like logs over one another in the corridors; carcases were strewed about in every part, and all the broken windows and walls were stuffed with feet, legs, arms, hands, trunks, and heads to fit the apertures and keep out the air from the yet living."

course of the evening some captured flags were exhibited to the Emperor, but he showed no exultation, and to the Poles he spoke of the campaign with the greatest impartiality, admitting that he had suffered much during the last six months, as he "did not possess Napoleon's happy philosophy," and "the responsibility of his position seemed too much for him when he reflected he must some day render an account to God for the life of each of his soldiers." "Often," he once said, "I felt disposed to knock out my brains; the war has cost me ten years of my life." A Polish lady told him a French general, dining with her, showed his hands "blackened by the bivouac fires on the retreat, but in reality quite clean." The Emperor smiled at this story, and said, "black hands were a peculiarity of French officers. The Russians were equally exposed to the smoke of their fires, but contrived to wash it off." He added, the French had no idea how little Napoleon really esteemed them. The Polish ladies* occupied themselves in picking charpie and distributing food to the prisoners. Huge fires were kept up in the streets night and day to purify the air. Every palace and large public building was made into a hospital, and the corpses collected and burned to the astonishing number of 17,000.

The increasing cold caused such havoc among the recruits, that Kutuzov can hardly be blamed for ordering the pursuit to cease on the Niemen. All the Russians were indignant at the apathy more than generosity of Prussia. Napoleon and his soldiers were well received directly they crossed her frontier, and, although now helpless, his German tributaries supplied him with new armies instead of checking his retreat or establishing their independence. Romanzov and Kutuzov spoke the prevalent feeling when they entreated Alexander not to trouble himself further with ungrateful Europe.

Two days after his arrival at Vilna he received his officers at a levée, and bestowed the title of Prince of Smolensko on Kutuzov for a series of battles from November 16th to 20th. He thanked all for their services, and hoped to continue the campaign to the Vistula. He distributed rewards to the officers and soldiers who had done their duty heroically, but

* "The Polish women," says Wilson, "are resolved to have a Court, and they do not much care who presides."

reproached some of the Poles for disloyalty, though he said he should forget the past. He published a full and complete amnesty, even to those in Napoleon's service, if they quitted it within two months ; but even where the owners of estates did not return during that time their lands were only sequestered, to prevent the income from supporting foreign armies, not confiscated. After a fortnight he left for Kovno as he came, without escort, and at the head of the Russian army crossed the Niemen, January 1st, 1813. On the last day of the year he addressed a proclamation to his soldiers, dwelling on their exploits, their devotion, and the gratitude of Russia. Each received a silver medal as a remembrance of the campaign of 1812. It bore the inscription : " Not unto us, O Lord, but unto Thy name give the praise."*

During this campaign there was not an instance of a Russian battalion or squadron laying down its arms, and the Prince of Georgia, commanding the Black Sea Cossacks, fought as bravely as any native of the empire. When the Russians crossed the Niemen they left 24,000 sick and 63,000 wounded in the hospitals in Russia, and not more than 30,000 were assembled under Alexander's command ; but nearly two-thirds recovered sufficiently to join their comrades once more, a proof of the improvement in the Russian medical staff. At Borodino 18,000 wounded Russians were dressed on the field, and sent off in carts all over the country. The whole number of human bodies, Russian and French, men, women, and children, collected and buried in the Russian empire, exceeded 300,000 ; the frozen state of the ground, and the necessity for haste, preventing the usual interment. Not a gun or a horse of the army of 600,000 French, Spaniards, Germans, Italians, Dutch, Austrians, Prussians, Danes, &c., ever returned to France, and not more than 18,800 natives and 23,000 foreigners from among its men.† Fifty-one generals

* "On the medal for 1812 we read the motto, rendered familiar by Paul I., who wrote it in letters of gold in front of the St. Michael Palace: 'Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give the praise.'"
— De Maistre's Correspondance.

† This is given by the French returns, so includes the very outside, and many did not straggle back for months afterwards.

"The attempt," says Alison, "to attribute the French disasters to the climate is perfectly hopeless, and has been abandoned by their ablest military writers."

were captured by the time they reached Vilna, but, owing to the different method in which the French and Russians arrange their armies for battle, the proportion of officers and generals who perished was higher with the Russians than with their enemy. The French carried away neither trophies nor spoil.

Macdonald was already driven towards Prussia when he received Murat's order, December 18th, to retreat as leisurely as he could. The Prussians under Yorck made a stand at Mittau, but were driven from it by Paulucci, who marched on Memel, making 125 miles in eight days, and took possession of the magazines. The Prussian governor capitulated, and General Diebitch, who had harassed Macdonald's rearguard, by a skilful manœuvre placed himself between the Prussians under Yorck and the remainder of Macdonald's corps, and sent a flag of truce to Yorck telling him he was entirely cut off, and demanding his surrender. The Russians were in a position to possess themselves of all his baggage and artillery, but they had orders to deal mildly with the Austrian and Prussian wings of the Grand Army, so preferred negotiation. Yorck accordingly signed an armistice (December 30th), by which the Prussians were allowed to march unmolested through a specified district, but if subsequent orders from their King disavowed any prospect of peace, they were bound not to take up arms against the Czar within the space of four months. Yorck's "defection," as it has been called, is often misrepresented, and his sincerity throughout questioned; but there is no doubt that, spurred on by the hope of the Baltic provinces, the Prussians did their very utmost, till they were ordered to retreat, to serve their French allies. This corps had suffered fearfully from the cold; the sight of the first waggon loads of frost-bitten sick who were brought into Berlin almost excited an insurrection against the King; some whose eyes had been frozen, and both eyelids and eyes dropped away, others "looking as if they had been in the hands of the Turks," without either ears or nose; another idiotic from his sufferings, giving the word of command with a voice no longer human, but more like the bark of a dog; and many who had lost their hands and feet. With these victims, and the cold increasing instead of diminishing, and no further object than to protect the French retreat, Yorck may be believed when he stated

that "the purest motives guided his actions," and "that as a faithful subject of the King of Prussia he could only consider his interests in this matter without attending to those of France, to whom in her actual condition the sacrifice of the corps under his command could have been of no real use." Wittgenstein's conduct is a proof there was no previous understanding between the two armies, as, if he could have been sure of Yorck's neutrality, he might have hastened forward, and taking advantage of two days' delay Macdonald made at Tilsit, could have established himself on the route to Königsberg, and cut off his retreat. But the French, anxious to attribute their disasters to treachery, were pleased to find a pretext for accusing Yorck.* The King ordered him to be arrested and his corps to join the French, not considering that the armistice had prevented Prussia being entered as an enemy's territory. Yorck, fearing for his head, remained within the Russian lines, refusing to give up the command to Kleist, directed to supersede him. Hardenberg at the same time signed a fresh alliance with the French minister in Berlin, and the Prussian contingent in the French service was to be raised to 60,000 men. The Prince of Hatzfeld carried to Napoleon the King's declaration that he "continued resolved to maintain the French alliance."

Schwartzenberg, with a French general at his head-quarters, faithfully followed out his orders during the last part of the campaign. The Austrians overran Volhynia, doing much damage in that fertile part of Poland, but were compelled to retire before Tchichagof and Tormassof. When these pushed on to intercept the French at the Beresina, the Austrians pursued them. Then counter orders reached Schwartzenberg, directing him to fall back on Warsaw. Napoleon's evidence clears him from the charge of wasting his time in minor operations and of laxity of zeal, which some writers bring against him, apparently forgetting the immense distances in Russia, for he praised the Austrian operations, and recommended Schwartzenberg to the Emperor Francis for a marshal's bâton, besides receiving him very well in Paris. At St. Helena he said Schwartzenberg was not fit to command 6000 men, but

* Napoleon was rather pleased than otherwise, for it gave him a pretext for threatening Prussia and levying more recruits in her territories.

this was applied to his subsequent campaign *against* the French, when he certainly proved its truth, though on that occasion, if inclination had not prompted him to *assist* his late allies as much as possible, he was apparently bound to do so by his Government, and throughout he showed himself to be Napoleon's best friend. He now remained in Poland, threatened by Miloradovitz, Sacken, and Touchkof. Alexander offered him an armistice, which he referred to Vienna. The cold necessitated a virtual cessation of arms from December 23rd to January 25th, when, as there was no prospect of relief, he received orders to capitulate for Warsaw. He asked the liberty of the French and Polish contingents, but was refused; and 4000 of the last were made prisoners of war, besides 2000 Austrians left in the hospitals when the Russians entered the city, February 8th. Poniatowski had already withdrawn to Cracow, and Regnier and the Saxons to Glogau. Without these prisoners the Russians had *captured* 3048 officers from the main army and 190,000 soldiers, besides seventy-eight eagles or stands of colours and 929 cannon, exclusive of those thrown into the rivers or buried. It was a campaign unexampled in the history of Europe, and there was another coming to both the antagonists, for the mortal struggle continued till the aggressor was overthrown.*

Napoleon replaced Murat by Eugene Beauharnais when the first found himself unable to remain at Vilna, and the fidelity of Austria and Prussia gave him time to prepare for the campaign of 1813. Financial reasons made Austria hold out hopes of an alliance to England, but Francis gave his daughter to Napoleon to secure his friendship, and all evidence

* In Napoleon's speech to the Council of State on the 20th of December, 1812, he said: "It is to ideology that we must ascribe the misfortunes of France; its doctrines placed authority in the hands of men of blood, who preached insurrection as a duty, and flattered mobs by proclaiming the sovereignty of the people, a sovereignty which the people are unfit to exercise. The war in which I am engaged is of a purely political nature. I have carried it on without bitterness or rancour, and would willingly have spared Russia the evils she brought on herself. By proclaiming the liberty of the serfs I could have armed half the population against her, but I refrained from a measure that would have entailed death and suffering on so many families." Even the French could hardly have believed that he preferred to expose his army to the chances which caused its destruction, rather than give liberty to millions, and endanger the safety of some Russian boyard families.

proves had no wish to disturb it now. The French journals continued to deny the Russian march to Kalisch. "Germany had nothing to fear from the intrigues of England or the irruption of barbarians, who would be driven back more rapidly than they advanced." Napoleon even announced, February 14th, to the Senate, that "England was compelled to evacuate Spain, and that in Russia he had triumphed over every obstacle created by the hand of man. The Russians should be expelled to their frightful deserts, and the French dynasty continue to reign in Spain." Yet within a year he offered to restore the Spanish crown to Ferdinand, when much pressed by the Allies. Italy and the Confederation of the Rhine responded with protests of devotion to the French Empire: 40,000 sailors were at once turned into the artillery, and a fresh levy of 350,000 recruits was raised from the population of France.

But if Napoleon's ability to collect a new army has received the highest praise, the same is decidedly due to Alexander, who might have concluded peace on the most advantageous terms at that moment; but in the coldest part of the year, on the frozen Niemen, was utterly regardless of physical comfort, and only bent on bringing a sufficient number of troops together to restore the independence of the Continent. All Germany was still a hostile territory, and Prussia reduced to the strength of Saxony and Bavaria. These last were Napoleon's staunch allies, so that even if Prussia saw her true interests, the Confederation of the Rhine, Austria, Italy, Denmark, and France were all Russia's enemies, and Alexander could hope for nothing more than neutrality from his grandmother's old enemy, Charles XIII., who had more influence in Sweden than is generally supposed, or from the ex-French general, Bernadotte. With all these disadvantages he crossed his frontier with 30,000 men. Modlin was garrisoned by Poles, but he pushed on, leaving several fortresses in his rear, as prompt action was required before a new French army could advance, for Frederick William was sure to yield to the strongest. In fact, Russia *conquered* Prussia. Wittgenstein's corps crossed the Vistula January 15th, having taken Königsberg and thirty pieces of the battering cannon used at Riga; he distributed proclamations to assure the Germans of Russia's friendship, and proceeded in two columns on Berlin, which he

entered March 3rd. Platof laid siege to Dantzic January 24th, while Tormassof and his division accompanied Alexander and Kutuzov to Plock. The marshal did not cease to protest against crossing the frontier, and never could be induced to pass the Elbe. Tchichagof arrived at Marienburg in the middle of January, and Pillau surrendered, the French garrison being allowed to withdraw if they retired to the left bank of the Rhine.

"Without Alexander's Imperial influence we should have never passed the Niemen," wrote General Phull, and it would have saved some bloodshed if Prussia had made up her mind to join him at once. The Russians and Stein were raising the population of East Prussia, and Frederick William saw it would be almost impossible to declare against them, since they held both his capitals. Alexander put forth a proclamation to the Germans from Warsaw, February 22nd, which may be styled almost revolutionary. He "recalled to the people as well as to the Kings their interests and their duties. Fear may still possess your Sovereigns, but let not a disastrous obedience restrain you. Equally unfortunate with yourselves, they abhor the power they dread, and will in the end applaud the generous efforts which shall accomplish your happiness and their liberty. . . . If a misled nation can raise some generous feelings from such extraordinary events, we should tender a helping hand, and Europe would recover its peace," &c. When the Russians marched upon Berlin the King fled to Breslau. The Germans proved themselves by no means the least savage of the Grand Army on the soil of Russia, and he feared that this semblance of friendly disposition might only conceal covert schemes of revenge.

But Napoleon, himself a practised dissembler, could not realize that Frederick William was positively unwilling to avail himself of this splendid opportunity of throwing off the yoke of France, when Alexander* actually offered to forgive everything and

* Wilson says that Alexander told two Polish ladies, at whose house he lodged on his way to Kalisch, "I pledge my Imperial word that Napoleon twice offered to sacrifice the Duchy of Warsaw since its constitution." He said he did not count on Austria, but hoped to restrain her by means of Turkey. "A report reached the Emperor at Plock that the Poles had proposed to disguise a party as Cossacks, and enter his headquarters. Various persons cautioned the Emperor against going about," &c.—Diary of Sir R. Wilson.

restore his towns. He afterwards acknowledged his mistake, and now, by his desire to exhaust a prostrate kingdom, he threw her into the arms of Russia. "The King of Prussia," says Hardenberg in his Memoirs, "was far from regarding France as overthrown at this time.* He resisted only any further extortions." Frederick William used the same words† to the French ambassador, January 13th, whom Hardenberg also assured that "nothing but despair would make Prussia turn to Russia; if he would only give her some pecuniary assistance, she would form the closest alliance against the Northern invaders." The Grand Army during the campaign of 1812 levied contributions of 3,720,000*l.*, 70,000 horses, and above 20,000 carriages upon Prussia, in addition to former war indemnities. But Napoleon refused to pay back any of this sum; Prussia must even equip her own contingents. The King and Hardenberg next proposed that Prussia should remain neutral and act as mediator between the belligerents, one of whom should in that case withdraw beyond the Elbe, the other beyond the Vistula (February 15th). Then he offered that Silesia only should be neutral, where the King retired with his family, and even this was refused. But Alexander decided it by sending Baron Anstedt to Breslau, with a treaty ready drawn up for an alliance between Russia and Prussia. The envoy was to inform the King that unless he agreed to join Russia, the members of the Tugend Bund, or German insurgents, whom Alexander called to arms, would render a suspension of his regal authority necessary, and a Regency must be appointed. Alexander suggested the expediency of calling out the landwehr or militia, instituted during

* Napoleon, answering a letter from his brother Joseph on the subject of some complaints of Soult, says "he could not attend to such trifles while at the head of 500,000 men, and engaged in enormous undertakings." "The King of Prussia," he also says, "and his Prime Minister were favourably disposed, but that the feeling of the nation was different."

† "Tell Napoleon that, as to pecuniary sacrifices, they are no longer in my power, but if he will give me money I can raise and arm 50,000 or 60,000 men for his service. I am the natural ally of France; by changing my system of policy I should only endanger my position and give him ground for treating me as an enemy. I know there are fools who regard France as struck down, but you will soon see it present an army of 300,000 men as brilliant as the former. I will support all the sacrifices required of me," &c.

Stein's administration, and after three days' resistance the King yielded an hour before the treaty was signed, February 28th, 1813.

This treaty of Kalisch provided that neither of the contracting powers should make peace without the other; they were both to use every effort to induce the Cabinet of Vienna to join them, and lose no time in treating with England for Prussia to obtain the needed subsidies. Alexander also engaged not to lay down his arms till Prussia was reconstituted in all respects as she had stood before 1806, with such additions as should give her more consistence and render her an effectual bulwark to Russia. At Posen he gave directions* that Poland should be treated as a friendly territory, and arrived at Breslau March 15th, where he met the King of Prussia. The recollection of all that had passed since he last saw his old ally affected the King to tears. If Alexander entertained any rancour it immediately vanished, and he did his best to console him.

The formal notice of Prussia's alliance with Russia was forwarded to the French Government, March 27th. Maret answered with a merited reproach, only France had surpassed Prussia in breaking her engagements. "As long as the chances of war were favourable to us you remained faithful to treaties. . . . His Majesty prefers an open enemy to an ally always ready to abandon him. What can Prussia now do? It has done nothing for Europe, it has done nothing for its ancient ally (Russia), it will do nothing for peace. Such a power can never be either useful or respectable."

Another agreement was signed, March 19th, by Alexander and the King concerning the details of provisionally ruling the various Governments of Germany, and the billeting and maintenance of the allied troops. Four days afterwards the Russian general proclaimed that the Confederation of the

* "After Alexander had joined the Russian army," says Wilson, "he gave a useful encouragement to individual efforts by his own example, supporting privations, cold, fatigue, &c., which, added to great affability, produced good effects on the soldier. At his head-quarters at Kalisch he was equally remarkable for his activity. Couriers carrying on numerous occasions autograph letters were expedited in all directions to collect the convalescents and to bring up new recruits and medical provisions; in short, to inspire the Sovereign's ardour into all the branches of the Government."—*Sketch of the Military Power of Russia.*

Rhine was dissolved, and the Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin set the example of seceding from it, having been one of the last to enter it, and then strongly against his will. By the arrangements drawn up between the Emperor and King, Germany was spared as much as possible the inconvenience generally attending an army of occupation, and which she had so long undergone from the French. The strictest discipline was preserved in the Russian army, and the conduct of even the Cossacks, Kalmucks, and Bashkirs, while they sojourned in the heart of Europe, was an agreeable contrast to that of Napoleon's armies when they crossed Germany and Prussia in the guise of friends. At the same time the most minute directions were laid down in the agreement as to the mode in which the Russian armies were to be billeted and fed, so that there should be no chance of the scarcity or niggard policy which Austria displayed towards her allies in the campaign of Austerlitz, or that had rendered futile the battle of Eylau, and eventually led to the peace of Tilsit.

The King of Prussia left Breslau for Potsdam, March 19th, when Alexander had returned to Kalisch. He would not accompany the King to his capital, lest her sovereign should appear to be restored through foreign troops, which was really the case. At Kalisch he received Pozzo di Borgo, whom he had not met for five years, and was joined by Lord Walpole, Lord Cathcart and his son, and other foreign representatives. Several English officers were also accredited as diplomatists at the allied head-quarters. In March and April the Russians had turned out the French garrisons and occupied Hamburg, Lubeck, Dresden, and Luneburg; and besieged and captured Czeszochau, Spandau, and Thorn. The keys of Thorn, which he presented to the Czar, were Kutuzov's last trophy, for he died at Bunzlau, worn out by the fatigues of the winter's campaign, May 10th. His body was transported to Russia, and buried with great military honours in the Cathedral of St. Alexander Nevskoi.

At Hamburg the Russians were received with the greatest joy, and followed with shouts of "Long live Alexander! long live the Cossacks!" The citizens were surprised to see the Cossacks and Bashkirs pile their arms and sleep at night beside their horses in the open squares of the city, instead of

turning the poor out of the workhouses and lunatic asylums into the snow, as was the case when their city was reoccupied by the French. Encouraged by a false report that a strong British force had landed in North Germany, the inhabitants of Luneburg, a small town near Hamburg, rose against the French authorities and expelled the garrison. A French corps from Bremen marched upon Luneburg, and twenty-seven of the principal inhabitants were only saved from execution by the prompt arrival of a troop of Cossacks, who made an entrance into the place and rescued them, capturing on their side 2000 men. On March 25th Alexander called upon the German people to arm, holding out hopes in the name of their Sovereigns of establishing a constitutional government in their States, which would place in their hands a guarantee of their future independence. He exacted a promise to this effect from the King of Prussia, and was much annoyed when, in common with many other potentates, he refused to fulfil this engagement at the close of the campaign. Students and professors alike came forward, prepared to fight by each other's side. The Pomeranian militia, in peasants' frocks, armed with lances, were organized into regiments, with the promise that their wives and children should be taken to Russia if their homes were threatened. But there were many in Prussia who seemed hardly even anxious to throw off the yoke of the French. Goethe, meeting Korner and Arndt in Dresden before the battle of Lutzen, said to them, "Well, shake your chains, the man Napoleon is too strong for you; you will not break them." There were murmurs that the Russians always exaggerated their own strength, and that Russia was drawing Prussia into a war beyond her power; for the Russians, though spread over a great tract of Germany, really amounted to less than 60,000 men. The French were revenging themselves in those districts they still occupied by inhuman cruelties, in which Davoust and Vandamme were conspicuous, and this conduct terrified many a timid heart. It was Napoleon's saying that strict discipline demoralized an army, and in Russia gave orders that the enemy should be treated "without pity and without repose."

Alexander received a letter, January 11th, from Czartoriski, asking again to be released from his oath, and notwithstanding

recent events to plead once more the cause of Poland. On the side of Cracow, Poniatowski, under the protection of Austria, still harassed the Russian troops, and yet he trusted that he could procure from the generosity of Alexander not only an unconditional pardon for his countrymen, but an actual reward.

He said he feared the continental Powers would turn him from so noble an idea, and he dreaded the counsels of the men who surrounded him. He might now do everything he had once longed to do. It was a moment that might never return. "If your Imperial Majesty, while the nation is expecting the vengeance of a conqueror, would hold out your hand and offer what to her was the object of the campaign, the effect would be magical. It would surpass your expectations. You would be astonished and touched by it. If you chose to follow the proposal relative to the Grand Duke Michael, I could take on myself to sign everything without delay, and to answer that all you might exact should be fulfilled. I think it my duty to tell you that the Grand Duke Constantine, your apparent successor, is a constant source of uneasiness and alarm. The Poles prefer another branch. In fact, a King of Poland who had 300,000 Russians under his orders would be always able to defy the laws, to break his promises, or to destroy all his predecessor had established," &c.

Alexander answered the letter from Leypouney, January 13th. "Success," he said, "had not changed his intentions towards Poland. He had no thought of vengeance; he wished to repay good for evil, and had given the strictest orders to his generals to treat the Poles as friends and brothers, but he had to master difficulties. First, opinion in Russia. The manner in which the Polish army has conducted itself towards us, the sacks of Smolensko, of Moscow, the devastation of all the country, has revived ancient hatreds. As military events proceed, you will see how far the interests of your country are dear to me, and that I remain faithful to my old ideas. As to the forms, you know I have always preferred the liberal. I ought to warn you, and decisively, that the idea about my brother Michael cannot be admitted. Lithuania, Podolia, and Volhynia are regarded here as Russian provinces, and no logic in the world can persuade Russia to

see them under the rule of any other Sovereign than he who governs Russia." He advises the Poles, in their own interests, to display a good feeling towards the Russians, to extinguish the recollections of the late campaign, and facilitate his work. "On my side I have given proof of the sincerity of my intentions towards the Poles by ordering my armies not to occupy Warsaw, but in that case no foreign troops must remain there, and yours as little as possible, so as to cause no uneasiness by a camp in our rear. You may arrange with the members of the Confederation and the Government to remain quietly at Warsaw; they shall not repent of it. Concerning military operations and my forces, besides the armies actually in the field, each regiment throughout the army has already 1000 men as a reserve of infantry, and two squadrons for each regiment of cavalry, completely equipped, and mounted and provided with companies of artillery in reserve to enter into the ranks of the active armies in the spring. Independently of this mass in reserve, there is a recruiting of 180,000 men, and it will serve to form another reserve as soon as the present shall be incorporated into the active army. Besides the militia, the cavalry, infantry, and artillery of the different governments will be on foot; 75,000 of these are marching under the orders of Count Peter Tolstoi, to make observations in Volhynia. The energy of the nation is beyond all praise, and I am determined to pursue the war, not only during this winter, but till there is a general and solid peace, insuring the security of Russia and Europe.

"As to yourself personally, I should have allowed you to resign at once, but two considerations restrained me. In the eyes of your own people not acquainted with everything, it would seem to show a change in my intentions towards Poland; while disengaged from all ties towards me, you might take personal measures which would have the worst effect in Russia, and would destroy your own power to further my plans. I think, like you, that your presence where you are is infinitely more useful than if you joined me." He recapitulates the proofs that the Poles need fear no vengeance from him; all the authorities of the Duchy were preserved throughout; and continued success would greatly aid him in his plans for her restoration, which only reverses could prevent. A

treaty of alliance, concluded between the Government of the Duchy and himself, would much tend to create an indissoluble tie between them, and in that case he should think himself authorized on the part of Russia not to lay down arms till the hopes of Poland were realized, because Poland would have shown to Russia and Europe that she had put her confidence in him, and no one had ever yet 'done so in vain.'

But here again France proved herself Poland's worst enemy. Napoleon's agents encouraged her resistance to Russia; and Poniatowski and his corps, permitted by the terms of the armistice with Austria to withdraw quietly from the country, kept up a desultory warfare from Galicia, to make a diversion in favour of their ally. The Poles held out in the garrisoned towns, and the Polish army still kept together, believing that France must triumph in the end. In Czartoriski's eyes it was good policy for Russia to endure every injury the Poles could inflict, and yet constantly restrain the arm of the military and hold out the hand of friendship when it was as often rejected, and a real military demonstration would have settled the matter with much greater speed. He wrote again to press once more for the entire restoration of Poland; the King of Prussia, he thought, would be friendly to it—Prussia whom he considered in 1805 as Poland's most inveterate enemy, and added that the Russian officers were not averse to it merely because Wittgenstein, a German by birth, was favourable, since he thought she would make a useful ally, who would be required before Napoleon could be utterly crushed. Nothing proves more fully the exaggerated notion of the French power compared with the rest of Europe, which prevailed in England and universally among the Liberals of the day, that no plan was formed out of Russia in view of Napoleon's failure in the campaign of 1812. The English had been spending their resources in Spain, where in that mountainous country the Spanish guerillas alone had greatly troubled the French. They had undergone immense sacrifices as regarded their trade during the last five years of the war, but were now prepared with no extraordinary effort at a moment when combined action on the part of the Allies would have completed Napoleon's fall within a few months. Russia, notwithstanding all she had suffered, was the only

country ready to carry on active operations. Austria was still the firm ally of France, besides the whole of Western Germany and Saxony, while Prussia wavered, the professors of literature which had suffered grievously from the French régime, being the most determined among her people to bow no longer to a military tyrant.

But if England had no armament able to land at once on the Continent, she came forward most liberally with money and ammunition: the young German army was almost entirely clothed and armed from her stores; and she offered a subsidy of two millions to the Prince of Sweden, and two millions to be divided between Russia and Prussia, on condition that the last should cede Hildesheim, Minden, and Ravensburg to Hanover. The offer was made to Sweden at a time when there was a very erroneous impression as to the part she was likely to take in the war, and under the belief that she would come forward with an army of the material which followed the great Gustavus and Charles XII. On the contrary, as the English commissioners remarked, the Swedish contingent looked like armed peasants, and was only a militia seldom drilled together, and maintained at the cost of the Swedish proprietors. They had no affection for their Crown Prince, who had usurped the place of their ancient dynasty. He even said he was not safe among them without a guard of Russian or Prussian troops. He was a good soldier, but no statesman; and, as a Frenchman, it was his feeling as well as he thought his interest to prevent any serious injury being inflicted on the French army. He wished to conciliate it, in the hope of being Napoleon's successor if Napoleon was dethroned, and every plan he proposed in the campaign was most obviously intended to assist them. Alexander and Sir Charles Stewart (afterwards Lord Londonderry), who was accredited to the head-quarters of the allied armies, were made aware very soon of his treachery; for he actually carried on communications with Napoleon, and informed him of their plans. On the other hand, he could not openly declare himself for France without losing his prospect of the throne of Sweden and all power over their army; for the old King would not join Napoleon unless Norway was secured for him; and Denmark, to whom it then belonged, remained attached

to France. After the treaty of Abo, a fresh diplomatic correspondence was carried on between Napoleon and Bernadotte, in March, 1813, Napoleon being encouraged by the treaty still remaining unfulfilled on the side of Sweden. Bernadotte wrote to his old master that King Charles* had a keen remembrance of the injuries France caused to Sweden, and had affirmed he could never believe in the friendship of France unless she gave him Norway in exchange for Finland.

From Kalisch the Czar tried to induce Denmark† to join him, and Counts Moltke and Bernstorff arrived with full powers to sign a treaty, but on conditions he could not fulfil without breaking with Sweden and England. They demanded the restoration of the fleet taken by England, and 600,000*l.* indemnity for the bombardment of Copenhagen. They also required the guarantee of Norway to Denmark, the cession of Hamburg and Lubeck, and all the Danish colonies conquered by the English during the war. Alexander offered his alliance to Saxony before entering Dresden (April 8th), but received a cold refusal from the King, who said he should adhere "to Austria and the Confederation of the Rhine in their resistance to Russian interference."

The English envoy newly accredited to Berlin saw the King

* "The Emperor Alexander," he said, "and the King, already in the month of August, foresaw the termination of the late campaign and its probable results. All military combinations seemed to guarantee that your Majesty would be a prisoner. You escaped that danger, Sire; but your army, the *élite* of France, Germany, and Italy, exists no more, &c. Your Majesty invokes your rights to the friendship of the King. Permit me to remind you, Sire, of the little value your Majesty attached to it at times when a reciprocity of sentiment would have been useful to Sweden. When the King, after losing Finland, wrote to your Majesty to beg you to preserve the isles of Aland, you replied to him, 'Apply to the Emperor Alexander—he is great and generous.'"

De Maistre wrote to the King of Sardinia, March 19th, that "the Russians were disappointed in not finding a powerful diversion in Italy. England," adds the Count, "has certainly very fine sides, but terrible prejudices. The Sicilian operations shock policy, and I might say probity." On April 30th he writes, "Poland is entirely conquered; a Russian governor seated at Warsaw; Prussia is free, and the King, who has made common cause with the Emperor, reigns quietly in his capital. The Emperor and King protect the French, Bavarian, and Würtemberg ministers, for the people began to break their windows."

† There had been a family quarrel between Denmark and Russia in 1809, owing to the Crown Prince having divorced his wife, the Czar's connection, whom he had endowed.

of Prussia at Dresden, April 27th, and believed that he* regretted the step he had been forced to take by Russia,† and feared the result; and a little later the Prussian ministers were all anxious to draw out of the contest. Before the Prussian minister left Paris, Napoleon convinced him of the hopelessness of Prussian resistance. "The Russians," he said, "would never hazard a war beyond their own frontiers. Kutúzov was their only general." But in spite of boasting‡ that he could dictate a peace wherever he chose to the Czar, he sent Caulaincourt early in May, after having obtained what he called a victory, to offer peace to Alexander at Austria and Saxony's expense, proving that he did not underrate the strength and ability of his enemy. He knew that the Russians had with an inferior force defeated the French, and that he had never gained a battle against them without a heavy loss. What might not be expected if they ever succeeded in outnumbering their enemies?

The distinguished English officer already quoted§ contradicts the assertion of several military writers, that the Allies outnumbered Napoleon in 1813, and says those historians took their accounts of the allied forces from the exaggerated estimates of the possible amount drawn up when negotiations were being made to obtain Austria, and that never on any occasion during the war were they equal to Napoleon's armies, and on some occasions very much less. Of the divisions of the allied army, he observes that "the Russians were decidedly the best marchers. The generals of brigade looked well to the intervals of battalions. It would have been a

* "We were received in the most private manner possible." August 14th: "The King looks wonderfully well and young for his age. One would suppose his head had lain as uneasily as any that ever wore a crown, but his placid temperament sets him beyond the reach of cares that fret all happiness out of the lives of men less apathetically constituted."—Sir G. Jackson's Diary.

† Also King Leopold.

‡ He wrote to the Emperor of Austria: "Is not Wellington driven back into Portugal? Have I not all Europe at my back, as in the spring of last year? Are the Allies not already exhausted? Fools! they seek their own total destruction, and shall find it," &c.

"It is remembered," writes De Maistre, "that Bonaparte dined with the King of Saxony at his own house without any precaution during 1807, while at Tilsit he would not take tea at the Emperor of Russia's."

§ Sir George Cathcart.—War in Russia and Germany, 1813–14.

serious matter to them if they had neglected that duty; for it was almost the daily habit of the Emperor Alexander, in all the movements of the Grand Army during 1813 and 1814, to overtake the principal Russian columns on its march, and canter from the rear to the front, so as to arrive at the headquarters with it. And though he was not usually harsh, and required no recognition on these occasions, he was strict, and the power of an autocrat was not to be trifled with. This perfection of discipline in marching, long established and enforced, was the astonishment of Napoleon's army in 1812. They were capable of line movements in their campaign of 1806, and adopted line formation at that time in opposition to the French system of masses and attacks in column with good success on many occasions, but were then overwhelmed by numbers," &c. He adds, that in 1812-13 the Russian generals assimilated their mode of warfare to that of their opponent, but by so doing sometimes threw away "the advantage they possessed in point of superior tactical proficiency. Nothing could be more splendid or efficient in respect to horses, appointments, and discipline, than their reserve cavalry;" but Alexander, being reluctant to expose them, they were seldom employed. "The regimental cavalry constantly engaged with the enemy, under able and enterprising commanders, were of the greatest importance, whether at the outposts and in small bodies, or collectively in corps or divisions, and almost always successful, though opposed to superior numbers."*

Alexander's personal escort in Germany consisted of twenty Cossacks of the Guard, Volkonski, and a few of his personal staff.

* At the battle of Wachau this officer "was a witness of the defeat of 5000 of Napoleon's cavalry, being the corps of General Latour Maubourg, and led on by the King of Naples. They were put to the rout by three regiments of the light cavalry of the Russian Guard and a few squadrons of Cossacks, a force which could not have amounted to 2000 men. As to the Cossacks, though some of the most remote people sent warriors of savage appearance and lineaments strange to European eyes, they by no means deserved the general character for cruelty or indiscipline vulgar prejudice and sometimes designing policy have attached to them. They were subject to all the stringent regulations in respect to the police branch of discipline which were required to be observed and strictly enforced in the Russian army. No greater irregularities can be charged against them than would have been committed by almost any disciplined corps placed in similar circumstances."



Count Nesselrode acted as his secretary. He was of Livonian parentage, forty-three years old, but is still called a young man by his brother politicians, even then displaying the feeling for Austria which he maintained through his long career. During this campaign he was associated with Pozzo di Borgo and Anstedt in the actual work of Foreign Minister. Aratchaief left Russia later as Grand Master of Artillery, though he could never stand fire, giving as a reason, "the weakness of his nerves." Several foreign ambassadors asked to attend the Czar in Germany; but all were refused* except Lord Cathcart, who expressed himself much pleased with the reception Alexander gave him (March 2nd); and "he is always invited," writes Jackson, "when his Majesty has leisure to dine at all." "During these campaigns," says Cathcart, "Alexander performed each day's march on horseback, and never do I remember to have seen him use a carriage for that purpose except one night's march shortly before the fall of Paris. . . . In 1813 the Prussian army was very undisciplined, and great irregularities were tolerated by way of encouragement."

When Napoleon returned from the campaign in Russia, Talleyrand entreated him to adopt a peaceful policy if he wished to keep his throne. "It is now, Sire, the general hope that you will make yourself King of France. You are Emperor of the French; but your conquests and that title belong to the army, not to your people. Your people have not known you as a sovereign, only as a general." This advice was in consequence of the disturbance which broke out in Paris during Napoleon's absence, when, it being reported he was dead, no one for a moment thought of supporting his son. He was by no means pleased with Talleyrand's frankness, for he had no longer the choice of war or peace. He had thrown away the alliance which was his only hope of maintaining France in its present strength and in comparative tranquillity. Russia offered him no alternative but abdication, and as a Corsican, not a Frenchman, by birth, who had only

* "He detests above everything all residents near him," writes De Maistre. "If policy or consideration obliges him to do violence to his feelings so much the worse for the resident. The Emperor is the first prince in the world to annihilate a man without appearing to touch him."

made his adopted countrymen the tools for his personal aggrandizement and that of his family, his own position and advantage was of far more consequence in his eyes than her interests. He could not, like Peter the Great, when momentarily expecting to be captured by the Turks, desire his people to consider him no longer as their sovereign ; so France was to be stripped of the flower of her youth, and subjected to humiliation, merely to maintain Napoleon and his family on their thrones.

The man for whom he exhibited the greatest jealousy in the early part of his career was General Moreau, who refused the dictatorship of the Republic when the future Emperor was only First Consul, lest the dignity should lead sooner or later to a monarchy. After trying to implicate him in a conspiracy, Napoleon banished him ; and he had lived for some years in America when Alexander wrote from Dresden in 1813 to offer him a command. The Russian minister in the United States received orders to license a vessel for his conveyance to Sweden ; but Moreau had scruples about taking arms against his countrymen, and perhaps was not anxious to break up his happy home, till Alexander overcame them by an autograph letter. At this time the Czar hoped to enter France without striking a blow, by impressing upon the people that the Russians merely came to dethrone a dynasty whose existence was incompatible with the peace of Europe, and were willing to establish any other form of government capable of maintaining order approved by the educated portion of the people. He knew Moreau was the most popular hero of the Republic, and thought his presence with the allied troops would be a guarantee for the sincerity of his professions of goodwill towards the French nation. Moreau landed at Gothenburg July 24th, 1813, and his wife and son went to England.

At Dresden Alexander inhabited the Bruhl Palace in the suburbs of the city, but refused to close the garden against the public, for it was a favourite resort of the children, and in an evening he often came out to watch their games. When he walked into the city, accompanied by one aide-de-camp, he was followed by such crowds that he found difficulty in making his way. The Bashkirs were a daily source of

astonishment to the Saxon citizens. They slept on the ground in the garden of the Palace, and executed a wild flourish and savage war-song every morning and night under the Czar's windows.

When the Guards arrived under Constantine, Alexander met them at the gates, and marched at their head through the city, which was dressed with flags and wreaths, ladies carrying baskets of flowers forming a double row on their line of march. In retiring, Davoust had blown up a beautiful bridge over the Elbe, an object of the greatest pride to the inhabitants, and the Russians repaired it. Saxony deserted Prussia at the time of her greatest need, and could not in any case be depended on as an ally; but the King began to negotiate with the Russians, and sent off a courier from Prague, promising to join them if Austria would decide to do the same, when the news of the battle of Lutzen determined him to remain with France.

The Russian army, weakened by its garrisons in the various captured fortresses, was unable to obtain recruits, from the Russian roads and rivers being impassable in the spring. Napoleon was recruiting his armies from Holland, Switzerland, Italy, Denmark, and all Western Germany; and on April 15th left Paris for the seat of war. To conciliate his father-in-law, he appointed his wife Regent of France in his absence. At Erfurt he was joined by Bertrand with 40,000 men from Italy, and by Eugène Beauharnais (who sustained a defeat from Wittgenstein on the 7th of April) from Magdeburg; Macdonald, Duroc, and Marshal Bessières brought up the number to 140,000 men; and with this force he hoped to decide the campaign in a speedy battle.

The death of Kutuzov devolved the chief command of the Russian army on Wittgenstein only four days before this battle. Tormassof objected to serve under a man of foreign birth; but the Emperor acted in reality as generalissimo of the forces. He left Dresden a few days after his entrance to visit the position of his army; and, hearing Napoleon had passed the Saale on the 30th near Weissenfels, gave orders to the troops to advance with all speed to prevent his march on Leipsic, which, as well as Halle, was occupied by the Russians and Cossacks.

The allied armies amounted to 80,000 men, not much more than half of the enemy, and it was therefore rash to make the first advance ; but their état-major was not so well organized as it afterwards became, and they were unacquainted with the nature of the ground and the number of their foes. The King of Prussia, Scharnhorst, and Blucher directed their own troops ; and it was only Alexander's presence that could enforce obedience among the Russian generals, several of whom were Wittgenstein's seniors. Vinzingerode received orders at Leipsic to examine the road towards Weissenfels ; when he encountered a whole division commanded by Ney, including Napoleon. After a brisk action he fell back and took up a position for the night, communicating with the main army, in obedience to his instructions. Marshal Bessières was killed in this engagement.

It was evident the French army was marching on Leipsic, and the Allies crossed the Elster, to concentrate on the right flank of the French line, to engage their columns in detail, and gain an advantage before they could be supported. It is said the attack was delayed a few hours in consequence of Blucher being late, as the officer despatched by the King to summon him slept on the road.

Cathcart relates that, with his father, he arrived at Pegau on the Pleisse at about five A.M. of May 2nd, and found Alexander already there, anxiously watching the troops as they crossed the stream.* An enemy's bivouac was seen in the village of Gross Görschen, a mile and a half in front of the allied troops, and below the hill on which the Czar and the King took their stand during the battle. Wittgenstein was so little aware of the number of the enemy, that Cathcart heard him tell Alexander he would put him in possession of the enemy's corps before him within an hour's time ; whereas Napoleon, with his Guards and Ney's force of at least 60,000 men, passed the night at Lutzen, only four miles distant, and were fresh and prepared to support the division first attacked ; while the allied armies, with the exception of Vinzingerode's corps, had marched throughout the night.† A division

* Cathcart's War in Germany, 1812-13.

† Muffling states that Scharnhorst had calculated the French at 40,000 or 50,000 men less than they really were.

amounting to 10,000 men was also detached by the Allies to occupy Leipsic, and keep open communications with Dresden, and it was never engaged. The village of Gross Görschen was carried by the Prussians and held throughout the day ; but Little Görschen, Kaya, and Rhana, also occupied by the French, were taken and retaken several times, and remained with the enemy, who poured at least 120,000 men upon the position of the Allies. At the close of the day the allied cavalry, consisting of both Russians and Prussians under Blucher, made a charge, causing a good deal of confusion among the French. Napoleon's head-quarters fled in haste towards Lutzen, and the right wing retired towards Weissenfels. A hollow road, not perceived in the darkness, suddenly checked the assailants, and the unsupported cavalry retired by the left wing of the French. There was no moon, and darkness stopped the battle at nine, leaving the two armies in a parallel position ; but since reinforcements had arrived the French considerably outflanked the Allies, and threatened their line of retreat by Pegau. The Sovereigns did not quit the field till between nine and ten, when they made their way in the dark to Pegau, where Alexander spent the hours till daylight, but the King of Prussia went on to Lobestadt. The two armies passed the night under arms, within a stone's throw of each other on the field of battle ; but the want of a moon prevented night movements, and they confidently expected to decide the contest the next day.

During the night Alexander received information that Lauriston had expelled Kleist from Leipsic, while the Allies had expended all their ammunition in the battle, and the reserve was too far in the rear to supply the deficiency at once. This rendered a retreat to Dresden necessary, as in case of a lost battle the French had a more direct road from Leipsic to Dresden than the Allies, and if they gained the start might intercept their reserves and supplies. The Emperor and Wittgenstein sent directions to the allied divisions to retreat before dawn in two columns upon Bornau and Frohburg, and to Miloradovitz to form the rearguard of the retiring army, and retreat by Altenburg. Not a wounded man was left behind ; and the movement was effected in perfect order. The French remained stationary till the 4th. Eugene's corps

tried to harass Miloradovitz after the allied armies were stationed in the new town at Dresden. A few cannon shots were exchanged by the Russian rearguard with the French under Napoleon, when he occupied the old town on the 11th, and began to repair the bridges destroyed by the Russians. The death of Scharnhorst from a wound received in the battle cast a general gloom through the Prussian ranks.

Lord Cathcart* was a good Russian scholar, and therefore particularly well suited to the post he now occupied, not only as an ambassador, but as a general on Alexander's staff, at the especial request of the British Government. The night after Lutzen he spent in a cottage at Pegau. "Having been twenty hours on horseback," writes his son, "we found the bare floor of a cottage so comfortable a couch that no one seemed in any hurry to rise when informed, soon after daylight, that his Imperial Majesty was about to mount and depart, and the enemy were approaching to dislodge us. The Emperor slowly rode some miles towards the rear along the Altenburg road, conversing with Lord Cathcart about the battle." He then broke off, and proceeded with only General Balachof, first to Altenburg, to satisfy himself as to the arrangements for the wounded, and the movements of Miloradovitz, and then to Penig, where the baggage was to halt, and where he again met Lord Cathcart, who had ridden by a shorter cross-road. A dinner was hastily prepared, and they sat down a party of four. "Notwithstanding his recent failure, the Emperor was most agreeable and lively in his conversation.† He entered more seriously into the events of the previous day, and alluded particularly to a suggestion made in the field by Lord Cathcart, who proposed, with the Russian reserve cavalry under Vinzingerode, to attempt an attack against the enemy's right wing towards Weissenfels early in the day. . . . The Emperor explained that his objection arose from reluctance to engage that valuable body of heavy cavalry so early in the campaign. It might have been attended with severe losses not easily repaired. They arrived at Dresden the same night. The French had hoped to

* His son, the author of the Commentaries, was only nineteen at this time, and accompanied his father throughout the campaign.

† Lord Cathcart was of opinion that Alexander possessed a very remarkable power of concealing his real feelings.

capture the two Sovereigns, who were recognized by Napoleon with his field-glass, and pointed out to his generals early in the battle. The next day, in his carriage, he visited part of the ground thickly strewn with the French. An unexpected shout of the Cossacks made him quickly retreat, crushing his own disabled soldiers beneath his horse's feet.

The loss of the Allies in the battle of Lutzen is estimated as low as 10,000 killed and wounded, and as high as 15,000, of which hardly a fourth were Russians; that of the French far exceeded it, and has been counted at 18,000, or even more, for Ney's corps alone was deprived of 12,000 men and 500 officers.* Blucher was greatly disappointed at the battle not being renewed, and cursed the non-arrival of a Russian corps under Barclay, on its march from the Vistula. The Allies captured two pieces of artillery and 800 prisoners, and kept a portion of the battle-field taken from the enemy, while the French had not possessed themselves of a single trophy; but their adversaries had failed in the grand object of the attack, to drive them clear away from Leipsic; so both sides claimed the victory, and Napoleon immediately announced it in his usual exaggerated terms to the Courts of Europe, including Constantinople. The Empress went in procession to Notre Dame to return thanks, and a Te Deum was celebrated by Cardinal Maury, who delivered an oration upon the "invincible genius" of the French Emperor.

Before leaving Dresden a banker surrendered to the Russians the rest of the forged notes and accompanying correspondence which Napoleon circulated among the people of Lithuania, professing they had been issued from the Russian treasury, and had been seized at Vilna. Napoleon's mode of treating his allies the Saxons equalled his conduct towards his allies the Poles. When he entered Dresden, May 8th, and a submissive deputation awaited him, he said, "You deserve that I shall treat

* Cathcart, Jackson, Jomini, &c. "It is certain," says Sir George Cathcart, "that from the great superiority of the enemy in point of numbers, and from the manner in which their supports were gradually coming up, no decisive advantage could have been gained that day by any exertion on the part of the Allies; partial success would only have retarded their decision to effect a retreat, which must have been unavoidable; yet in arriving at that decision a few hours lost by the Allies and gained by Napoleon would have entailed irretrievable disasters on the combined army."

you as a conquered country. I know what has been your conduct during the stay of the allied Sovereigns within your walls. Your hostility to me, so strongly expressed when the Emperor Alexander entered your city, has been reported. But I will forgive all out of friendship for your King. Send a deputation to him, and request him again to favour you with his presence, for it is only out of affection for him that I pardon you." This affection was shown by an entire surrender of his revenues, fortresses, and armies being required, and only six hours allowed him to decide whether he would accept them or resign his nominal throne.

"In case of a refusal," said Napoleon, "inform his Majesty he is guilty of felony, and ceases to reign."

The fortresses and army thus obtained was a great accession of strength to Napoleon, and had a very bad effect throughout Germany.* The ex-King of Sweden came to

* Sir George Jackson writes from the Prussian head-quarters: "It is evident Hardenberg and his Majesty of Prussia are in a depressed state of mind; their hearts begin to fail them. They cannot now draw back, and almost anticipate defeat, and dread its consequences. . . . Many companies and regiments march to meet Bonaparte with a conviction that they are led out to encounter a foe that can never be conquered or killed. To this conviction amongst the men, and even in some of the officers, the many panics that have ensued in the Prussian ranks have been chiefly due. How often has it happened that, after desperate fighting and on the very eve of success, the slightest check to their armies or an unexpected advantage gained by the French, dispelled all the valour which in the heat of the conflict they had warmed up to, and, like men in despair, they have turned and fled! The terrible disasters of the Russian campaign inspired high hopes at first, but these have fallen considerably."

Wilson writes from the Russian head-quarters, May 10th, that the Russian army was growing weary and dispirited, and he agrees with the other foreign commissioners, that every Russian officer would gladly return home; and the Emperor alone preserved a hope of ultimate success. "With regard to the Russian officers," writes Sir Charles Stewart, "they are certainly brave men, and some of superior ability, but the generality of them did not at this period possess those talents and resources found amongst their opponents. The general tone was of a desponding nature. They thought they had done enough, especially as Austria had not declared herself, and Saxony continued to oppose them. The tide of their success seemed arrested, and they eagerly looked to their own frontiers. . . . Had not the Russians advanced in time to prevent the French from overrunning Prussia, no strong reinforcements could have been looked for from her. In May Bonaparte had nearly double the forces collected by the Allies. At this moment Alexander's presence in the field was a matter of no ordinary importance. It was necessary for the Emperor Alexander to use all that firmness, intrepidity,

Blücher's head-quarters, March 27th, to offer his sword to the Allies. It was refused from political motives, as it would endanger the connection with Sweden; and when the French entered Dresden, he made the same offer to Napoleon, who, hoping for Bernadotte's aid on his own behalf, also refused it, and Gustavus undertook a journey to the Levant.

On leaving Dresden the allied armies took up their quarters at Bautzen, about thirty English miles distant, where they had intended to form an entrenched camp. Here Francis sent Count Stadion to inquire on what terms Frederick William would conclude peace, and the King agreed to accept it under conditions* kept secret between him and the Austrians. This incensed the English commissioners. But Alexander persuaded him to reject all thoughts of peace till Germany should be declared independent, and throughout the campaign took care not to leave him to other advisers for any length of time. It was a war of brothers, for at Lützen the Würtembergers and Bavarians in the French forces bore the chief weight of the battle. Austria was placed in a most difficult position. The armistice she concluded in January with Russia continued, and she was anxious to establish herself as a mediator. To effect this she could not be forced to break the terms of the armistice, and place herself again in a hostile attitude to Russia; but she was pressed on one side by Poniatowski and the Poles, whom she had protected, yet who treated her territories like a conquered country; and on the other by France. In the south, Murat was coquetting with the British Government. "You have insulted an old companion in arms," he wrote to Napoleon, "faithful to you in danger, not a small means of your victories, a supporter of your greatness, and a reviver of your wandering courage on the 18th of Brumaire. You sacrifice to your suspicion the men who served you in the stupendous road of your fortune. Fouché to Savary, and tact which pre-eminently distinguished the latter period of his brilliant career."

* "However ardent," writes Jackson, "Prussia may be as a nation, the Prussian Cabinet is faint-hearted, distrustful of itself in this struggle with Bonaparte, and has need of a strong prop in its ally (Alexander) to keep it up to the mark. Hardenberg is not what he used to be; he is old and in bad health. The King sinks back into the same amiable nonentity he has ever been—ruled by those about him."

Talleyrand to Champagny, Champagny himself to Bassano, and Murat to Beauharnais—to Beauharnais, who has with you the merit of mute obedience, and that other merit more gratifying to you because servile, of having cheerfully announced to the Senate of France your repudiation of his mother. I can no longer deny to my people some restoration of commerce, some remedy for the terrible evils inflicted on them by maritime war," &c. Yet notwithstanding the utterance of these unpleasant truths, Murat again joined Napoleon in the campaign of 1813.

If Alexander had allowed natural feelings to prevail over policy, and paraded the victories of his troops over Austria in the late campaign, or had even pompously displayed the lawful trophies of war, her people would have unanimously preferred a French alliance; but as it was, they were more courteously treated by their enemy than by their ally, who quietly allowed them to be harassed by his Poles, without offering them any redress. As in Prussia, the popular desire was divided between an absolute wish for peace at any price, which perhaps predominated, an adhesion to France and a French alliance, with active operations against Russia, and an inclination to join with the Allies. Metternich and the Emperor supported the second party, Stadion and the Archduke Charles the third. The negotiation between Metternich and the Russian envoy, Stackelberg, shows clearly that the Austrian Government was most disinclined to act with Russia, and hoped to the last to be able to arrange a peace. Metternich dwelt on Napoleon's wish for peace, and in his interview with Count Otto, the French ambassador, on his fear of Russia claiming an increase of territory; as from the time of Peter I. she had never made peace without insisting on this point. He told Otto, if Napoleon would only act on the defensive, the Russians would never cross the Vistula, not knowing that the day before Alexander's army began its march to the Elbe. In the Czar's despatch to Stackelberg, dated February, and intended for Metternich, the Emperor said "he regretted Austria would not profit by the present favourable events to recover her losses; but he respected her motives; he had no other object than the conclusion of a general peace. The political system of Austria being definitely fixed, Russia will

not suffer any proceeding to turn her from it." Metternich showed this note to Otto, and said, "Russia took infinite pains to draw Austria into her alliance, but would not succeed." To Stackelberg he said, "the system of his Emperor was immovable. He only wished for a general peace, and anxiously desired Alexander to concur in it." Alexander answered, that the peace Austria offered must be equally accepted by England and Sweden. Schwartzenberg was sent to Paris, where he saw Napoleon, who threatened to divide Europe with Russia. Narbonne reminded Metternich, April 21st, that the treaty between France and Austria was not annulled by her wish for a general peace, and that treaty provided for an auxiliary corps. The Austrian minister explained, that the powerlessness of France in December and January compelled Austria to make her own terms with Russia, to preserve her army from annihilation, and if she now broke the terms of the armistice, she should give Russia ground to refuse her intervention. As to Poland, Napoleon told Narbonne "he had always looked upon her, not as an object, but as a means of effecting an object;" and directly after the battle of Lutzen, he tried to open a secret negotiation with Alexander. He desired Berthier to ascertain if the Czar would receive Caulaincourt to propose an armistice. No immediate answer came, so on May 18th, Napoleon sent Caulaincourt with a flag of truce to the Russian head-quarters to demand an audience, and propose an armistice "to prevent the battle which appears imminent, from the position the enemy has taken."

Caulaincourt's instructions were to this effect:—"The Emperor's intention is to negotiate with Russia a peace which may be glorious to her and make Austria pay for her bad faith, and the false policy she pursued in exasperating France and Russia against each other. Alexander will easily rebut these arguments by insisting on the radical evil of the existence of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, and that will naturally lead to those proposals which, on condition of secrecy, you are to suggest. The Confederation of the Rhine to be extended to the Oder; Westphalia increased by 1,500,000 souls; and Prussia to receive in exchange for the territory thus lost the whole Grand Duchy of Warsaw and the territory around Dantzic (of which Napo-

leon said he had made a second Gibraltar), with the exception of the Duchy of Oldenburg, so that she would acquire an increase of between four and five millions of people, and be as strong as before the battle of Jena. Her capital should be Warsaw; and the advantage was that 750 English miles and an independent sovereignty possessing all the fortresses on the Vistula would lie between Russia and France.*

Alexander refused Caulaincourt a private audience, lest Napoleon should circulate a false report of their conversation; but he received him in presence of the King of Prussia and the ministers of England, Austria, and Sweden. In their joint name he said he desired peace, but must adhere to his engagements with his allies, and the cause of European independence.

After Lutzen Napoleon detached Ney and Lauriston with their divisions to cross the Elbe and march on Berlin. They were intercepted by Barclay and Yorck, who defeated them at Königswertha in two separate battles, capturing 2000 prisoners and fourteen pieces of artillery. All these divisions were recalled by their respective sovereigns, in anticipation of a battle at Bautzen, where the Russians and Prussians posted themselves along a succession of low hills at the back of the small deserted town, which was barricaded to some extent; but the ground altogether was far too wide for their number, which was under 70,000 men, including Cossacks; while the French and their allies—the Saxon, Bavarian, and Rhenish troops—exceeded 115,000.† The Russians and Prussians greatly underrated their enemy; but they stood nobly to their position throughout an attack, May 20th, from the whole French army, led by Napoleon, and held it till night, when the enemy retired with great loss. The next day the engagement was renewed, the Russians and Prussians having abandoned the village, and concentrated themselves in their second line, and the two wings of their army became the chief objects of the attack. Before it opened they had a clear view of Napoleon and his staff.‡ He

* Jomini, iv. 296.

† Cathcart says more. Lord Londonderry gives 115,000 or 120,000 for the French, 65,000 for the Allies. Also Muffling.

‡ "All our glasses," says General Cathcart, "were directed towards him, and one belonging to Lord Cathcart was in great request, and employed on this occasion by Alexander and the King of Prussia. Although the two hostile staffs were not out of the range of each other's

made so sure of a complete victory from his numerical superiority both in men and guns, that he lay down on the ground on an eminence whence the field of battle could be well studied, though beyond the range of the artillery, slept for a short time, and called for his breakfast. He was disturbed while eating it by the repulse of Oudinot on the left by the Russians under Miloradovitz, assisted by the Russian reserves; but Ney and Lauriston, attacking Barclay on the right with a vastly preponderating force, were more successful, and it was thought might have led to a signal overthrow of the allied army if they had not been interrupted by a *written* order of Napoleon, which counteracted an error on the opposite side.

Baron Muffling was on the Prussian staff, and states that the night after the first battle he was summoned to attend a council. The Emperor appeared without the King, and expressed his conviction that Napoleon, being inferior in cavalry, would attack the allied left wing on the mountainous ground, and outflank it. Muffling showed that, with Ney's two corps advancing on the right, it would be Napoleon's best plan to turn that portion of the army and cut off its retreat to Gorlitz, where the Allies intended to march the next day. There was a windmill at the extremity of the allied right wing, and this was to be occupied with a strong battery. Alexander asked Wittgenstein the strength of Barclay's corps, and he answered 15,000 men. It was agreed these were sufficient, and Barclay was ordered to occupy it. The next morning Muffling was sent by the Emperor, shortly after the battle opened, to inform Barclay of the progress of the centre and left wing, and Muffling saw he was opposed by Ney with 40,000 men. The mill was riddled with shot, but Barclay, calling him into it, said, "You believe I have 15,000 men with me, and the Emperor believes the same. The moment is too important for silence. I have just 5000 men, and you may judge yourself if I can hold out against the 40,000 men advancing against me. Go to Blucher, report what you have seen, and bring me reinforcements." "I cannot picture my astonishment,"

artillery, and though Napoleon was quite within the reach of the Russian batteries, the Allies were too courteous to disturb his meditations by a shot. Berthier and others were recognized."

says Muffling. "Letting alone the untruth the General-in-Chief had told the Emperor, he wantonly endangered the battle." As Muffling would not commit Wittgenstein by stating Barclay's real force before all the staff, and every other corps being employed, Barclay's men would have been scattered long before Blucher could assist him; but Napoleon's order commanded Ney to leave that direction where he was advancing to turn the right wing of the Allies, and to march instead on the steeple of Hochkirch, the scene of the defeat of Frederick the Great. Barclay and Blucher were therefore assailed in front, and, after more than once recovering the ground, they retired fighting, but did not lose a single gun or prisoner. Between three and four P.M., Alexander very reluctantly directed all the troops engaged to break off and retire,* which they did in such order that Napoleon observed, they manœuvred and skirmished as they moved away like troops at a review; and that night they bivouacked within musket-shot of the French sentries, their baggage having been sent before the battle a day's march in the rear. "Are they made of iron!" he exclaimed; "is it impossible to break them! No results after all this carnage; not a gun, not a prisoner! We might as well fling ourselves against a stone wall." He seemed thoroughly disappointed. He had ordered the heaviest cannonade to be directed to the part of the field occupied by the Sovereigns, and ascertaining that they moved the next day

* Cathcart says, if he had delayed this decision Blucher would have been unable to withdraw his corps, which suffered severely as it was, from their general's reluctance to obey. As the German accounts of these battles generally reserve all the glory for their own generals, and all the blame for their allies, the English authorities, such as Cathcart and Stewart, are most to be relied on. Muffling's *Passages of My Life* would seem to lay the blame of the right wing being too weak on Wittgenstein rather than Alexander, whom the other German authorities quoted by Mitchel accuse of too great anxiety to spare his men.

"The dauntless personal courage of the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, who never quitted the field of battle," says Sir C. Stewart, "made the greatest impression on all around them. Count Wittgenstein did not possess the general confidence of the Russian army. They have most confidence in native good fortune and ability."—*War of 1813.*

Wilson says: "Bonaparte was so skilful an artillerist as just to keep out of range both of shot and shell, so that, though distinctly visible to the naked eye, it was impossible to reach him. The Emperor and King were far too much exposed (also Jackson); but still they showed a fortitude of mind, a self-possession and dignity that commanded the admiration of all. . . . Osterman a true hero."

towards Schweidnitz, at the foot of the Bohemian mountains, where another entrenched camp was preparing, he gave orders to attack them. Miloradovitz conducted the rearguard over a series of hills, where every favourable spot was immediately occupied with artillery, and the French had to form their masses under its fire; but as soon as they were ready to attack, the Russians withdrew, under cover of their cavalry, to occupy the next rising ground, and repeat the same manœuvre. Napoleon conducted the pursuit in person, intending to halt at Reichenbach, but finding the enemy was again in position at a short distance, he pressed on to obtain some trophy of victory. A stray cannon-shot from one of the Russian batteries fell close to him, killing General Kirgener and wounding Duroc, who died the same night. The loss of an old school-fellow or a death so near affected Napoleon more than usual, and he never led a vanguard from that time. He gave orders to the guards to halt and encamp, and visited the dying man, who was frightfully injured, and carried into a cottage near Makersdorf. The *Moniteur* described their interview as most touching, and some writers, who love to depict Napoleon as a mass of contradictions,* say he was so much absorbed in his grief as to decline listening to military details or giving any commands (a statement disproved), and sat in front of his tent for the rest of the day, an object of compassion to his surrounding guards. When he heard Duroc had expired, he handed to Berthier an order for a monument, with an inscription written down, but which, not giving the exact truth, showed his love for effect, even at so solemn a moment.

* Norvins yields to no one in eulogy of Napoleon, and had the best means of knowing all that passed on that day. He says: "The Emperor, though deeply afflicted, left the side of the dying man to watch over the welfare of the army, to distribute rewards, and work with his Minister of Foreign Affairs."—See Mitchel's *Fall of Napoleon*.

Count Beugnot was ordered "to make a great noise about the French victories of Lutzen and Bautzen" on the borders of the Rhine, but he found they were no longer believed when there was one continued demand for fresh troops; and wretched spectres kept wandering home, discharged from the military hospitals, the only representatives of the thousands of strong young recruits who were in constant march towards Eastern Europe. Napoleon told Beugnot the King of Denmark was furnishing him with 40,000 horses, that he had 400,000 men, and might double them with ease. "Then relapsing into truth," he added, "I must have troops and formed soldiers. You must do it as best you can. The time for looking into things so closely is gone by."

It stated that Duroc expired *in the arms of the Emperor*, whom all accounts agree was not present when he died.

The French lost more than 25,000 killed and wounded at Bautzen during the two days, and the Allies less than 10,000. The conduct of the battle is thought extremely creditable to Alexander, considering the great disproportion of the opposing armies, and he gave his orders with clearness and precision, and displayed the utmost coolness in the midst of a tremendous fire, by which many of those who surrounded him were shot down. He calmly deliberated with his staff on the advisability of a change of position in the thickest of the fight, but has been blamed for exposing himself too much for a commander-in-chief.

The great advantage in the movement of the Allies towards the Austrian frontier was that, far from Austria being induced to join Napoleon, if they met with reverses she would in that case be almost compelled to help them, to avoid becoming the scene of their battles, and her treasury and stores alike the prey of friend and foe. As enemies or allies Napoleon's armies were equally dreaded.* In Saxony, where the French wounded were in the charge of the citizens and received no other care, the track of the French troops was left a perfect desert—houses burned, gardens destroyed, shops plundered and roofless, and the cattle carried away. Among the commercial towns in the North, where a friendly feeling was displayed towards the Russians, the inhabitants were

* His orders were: "Cause the citizens of Hamburg who have served as senators to be arrested and brought before a military commission; five of the most guilty to be shot; the rest sent to France and confined as prisoners of State. The property of all to be seized and confiscated. Cause the town to be disarmed, and all the officers of the Hanseatic Legion to be shot; all the others who have served in the corps will be sent to France and condemned to the galleys. As soon as your troops reach Schwerin, endeavour without noise to obtain possession of the prince and his family, and send them to France to be confined in a State prison. Cause a list of 1500 rebels of the thirty-second military division to be made out; let it contain the names of the wealthiest individuals who have behaved ill. They must be arrested, and their property confiscated for the benefit of the Imperial domain. A contribution of 50,000,000 francs to be imposed on the cities of Hamburg and Lubeck. All the men known to have been leaders shoot or send to the galleys. As the princes of Mecklenburg will not know our intentions, you may promise anything demanded of you, but always under restriction of the Emperor's approbation. That approbation once obtained, everything would of course be in regular order."—May 7th, Waldheim.

treated, by Napoleon's special orders, with the greatest brutality. The Russians, leaving Hamburg to the protection of the troops of Mecklenburg and Prussia, marched on towards the Weser, where Vandamme, an agent worthy of his master, was forced to leave Bremen, but first shot twenty-three of the principal inhabitants. After Lutzen Napoleon wrote, May 7th, to desire Davoust, who was reinforced, to retake Hamburg, and send Vandamme into Mecklenburg, where Bernadotte was stationed with 23,000 men, and refused to fire a shot in defence of the helpless city. He was secretly corresponding with Napoleon, though receiving money from the English, and charged with the protection of the North; but Napoleon knew he could trust to his non-interference while he revenged himself on this hapless district.

The fall of the fortresses in Poland counteracted the loss of Hamburg and Lubeck, which were taken by the Danes. Voronzov and Czernichef were also very successful in cutting off convoys and detached French regiments. Bulow repulsed Oudinot when he endeavoured to carry out his orders to capture Berlin, and on the 26th, when Soult was again in pursuit of the Allies, a detachment under Ney and Maison were defeated at Haynau by Blucher, who took eleven guns and 1500 prisoners. At Gottesburg, on the 27th, eight squadrons of Russian cavalry defeated twelve squadrons of Napoleon's cuirassiers, and took 400 prisoners; but the same day a Russian convoy was surprised and captured by a corps of cavalry under Sebastiani. Czernichef was preparing to attack Leipsic, a post of great importance in the very rear of the French line, when he was stopped by an armistice, which also checked Voronzov's forays along the great roads through Thuringia and South Saxony. They had captured forty-six pieces of artillery, 100 ammunition waggons, and 3000 prisoners, which was more than Napoleon had obtained with the cost of at least 40,000 men.

The letter Napoleon sent to Alexander by Caulaincourt, May 18th, proposing an armistice, was answered after Bautzen, to the effect that the Allies had accepted Austria's mediation, and could treat only through her. The next day Stadion, who was still at the allied head-quarters, pressing the necessity of an armistice, wrote to Berthier that "the Czar and the King were pre-

pured to enter into the views of the Emperor Napoleon," who particularly wished to have a personal interview with Alexander, in the hope of making the impression he had done at Tilsit, and now wrote to express his earnest desire to see him. A formal answer was returned through Stadion, stating that Count Shuvalov, on the part of Russia, should be sent to the French advanced posts, which would save his Imperial Majesty the trouble of a journey for that purpose. A preliminary truce of thirty-six hours was signed, June 1st, and the arrangements for an armistice of two months drawn up at the village of Poischwitz. A stormy debate threatened more than once to check all further negotiation, particularly as to Breslau, which Napoleon claimed; and the allied plenipotentiaries were on the point of breaking off the conference, because the French soldiers renewed hostilities before the end of the truce, but were overruled by their masters, who, when Napoleon at last yielded his point of the Oder forming the boundary line between the contending troops, sent positive orders to sign it. The French withdrew to Leignitz, and accepted the line chosen by the Allies, leaving the fortresses of Landshut, Rudelstadt, Bolkenhagen, Striegau, and Canth in their possession, and keeping Leignitz, Goldberg, Lahn, and Poischwitz. The intermediate territory, including Breslau, was neutral; and the armistice was to last six weeks. The five blockaded towns were to be revictualled under the direction of commissioners; Magdeburg and the fortresses on the Elbe, with a league of ground round each, were to be neutral; and there was to be a total cessation of any kind of warfare. If Hamburg was not yet taken she was to be treated as one of the blockaded towns. Not a moment was lost in conveying the news to all Germany, and officers set out in parties of two, a Frenchman and a Russian or Prussian, to bear the tidings, which were joyfully received. Dresden was a perfect lazaret, from the number of French sick and wounded, which in this campaign Napoleon was unable to leave in the hands of the enemy; but they were nevertheless utterly disregarded in his arrangements, so that from want of proper food and medical care hospital fever was raging throughout Saxony. But if Germany had wished for peace, her indignation with her oppressor was raised to the highest pitch by a breach of the armistice

on the part of the French ; another proof that force was the only means by which she could secure the maintenance of any treaty imposed upon Napoleon or his lieutenants. Long after the truce was publicly known, a partisan corps, headed by Lutzow, 500 strong, was peaceably returning to Silesia, in accordance with its provisions, when it was attacked by General Fournier with 3000 men, and in great part captured or cut to pieces. The poet Körner seemed the object of their enmity, for Fournier cut him down with his own sword, exclaiming, "The armistice is for all the world except you." With Napoleon's systematic persecution of literary men who advocated any species of freedom, there can be little doubt this attack was made in obedience to his orders. Körner survived to lose his life in the battle of Dresden, August 26th ; but the wound inflicted on the dignity of Germany was too deep to be healed by any political arrangements between their chiefs, "No peace," was now the universal cry ; "revenge for Körner first."

A letter from Napoleon, captured in Joseph's portfolio in Spain, says, "the armistice had saved the French, for the days of Jena and Austerlitz were passed." Austria had insisted on a cessation of arms and the assembly of a congress before she took any further steps. Like the Prussian Government, she looked to peace as a probability ; England and Alexander did not believe that Napoleon would grant the concessions they required without a continuance of the war ; but if Austria could be gained it was worth the delay, and in that case they depended on the King of Saxony adhering to his promise. In the mean while reinforcements arrived from Odessa and the remote provinces of Russia, and the untrained bands of Prussia had time to learn the use of arms. The Austrian army was in the lowest condition, and her finances in a very distressed state. On paper her forces amounted to 180,000, but in reality she could not promise an effective force of 60,000 earlier than the end of July, if so soon, and then only if paid by England or by France. If Metternich was insincere in his protestations of allegiance to Napoleon at this moment, he was equally insincere a few months earlier in his professed secret attachment to the cause of the Allies ; for throughout his career he feared and hated Russia, and the

Austrian hereditary jealousy of Prussia had increased with tenfold bitterness since the aggressions of Frederick the Great. Austria's object was to limit Napoleon's ambition, but not materially to curtail his power ; yet if the Allies were actually to succeed in restoring Germany to independence, she would find herself thrust aside from German affairs in favour of Prussia, and in a secondary position, unless she came forward now ; the north of Italy might also escape from her. If Napoleon had paid her a subsidy sufficient to set the armaments on foot which he demanded, she might have decided at once to remain his ally. As it was, she must arm for one or the other, and England came forward with the money absolutely necessary to equip the required number of troops. When all was over Metternich claimed credit for a profound and far-sighted policy, and pretended that throughout he had in secret opposed France ; but all proofs show that he merely acted as a time-server, and before he changed his allies narrowly watched which was likely to be the strongest.

CHAPTER VI.

1813.

THE CAMPAIGNS OF DRESDEN AND LEIPSIC.

ÆTAT. 35.

THE armistice was ratified on the 4th of June, and the survivors of the Russian army of 1812 at last obtained a welcome rest. The troops were encamped at Schweidnitz, and the head-quarters of the Czar and the King established near the town of Reichenbach, where Alexander occupied the Castle of Peterswalde. Here early in June the final arrangements were concluded for the payment of a subsidy of 1,133,334*l.* to Russia if she maintained 160,000 men in the field, and her fleet ready manned and supplied was placed at the disposal of England for the general cause. She was also bound to equip and discipline a legion, recruited in Germany, of 10,000 men; and if she supplied it with officers England would pay the recruits. These two agreements were signed by Lord Cathcart, Nesselrode, and Anstedt at Peterswalde, June 16th, and at Reichenbach by Lord Cathcart and Baron Alopeus on the 24th. At the same time Sir Charles Stewart signed a treaty with Prussia; and a supply of the best guns, as well as money, was sent to Bernadotte, who kept them packed up on the Isle of Rugen, and allowed his soldiers only the rude weapons they had brought from home. Great Britain stipulated that English officers should be attached to each army of the coalition; which does not seem to have conduced to the welfare of the campaign, as there were already too many voices raised on the subject of the military movements. During the armistice Poniatowski and his Poles retired through Bohemia, and joined Napoleon's head-quarters at Dresden.

In the middle of June the Emperor Francis went almost alone to inspect a large stud in Bohemia, and Alexander took the opportunity to meet him there, disguised as a courier. They

had last seen each other when they parted after the battle of Austerlitz. The Czar's departure from Reichenbach was so private that an English commissioner who came to confer with him could not find out where he had gone, and went to Prague, where he was politely requested by the authorities to leave at once, lest his presence should compromise them with France. Jackson writes, "There is great shyness between the Russians and Swedes;" and Wilson even says, "If Russia continues the war, she must prepare to resist not only France, but probably Turkey, and certainly Sweden."*

The Congress of Prague opened July 5th, Humboldt and Anstedt acted for Prussia and Russia, but Napoleon had throughout treated the pretensions of Austria to be a mediator with contempt, and he delayed sending his envoys, Caulaincourt and Narbonne, who at last came without powers, only trying to separate the rest. Stadion, on the part of Austria, paid frequent visits to Peterswalde, and Napoleon again sent Caulaincourt to prevail on Alexander to accept a separate peace. He stated after the Russian campaign that he had given up all

* "All the Russians, with the single exception of the Emperor himself," says Jackson, "desire peace. . . . I dined to-day (August 3rd) with the Chancellor Hardenberg, who had a very large party to celebrate the King of Prussia's birthday. The tone and drift of the conversation was so extraordinary and unsatisfactory, that as soon as I could get away I rode over to Peterswalde to see Pozzo di Borgo, and to talk with him about it."

On the news of the battle of Vittoria, received at the end of June, a thanksgiving service was chanted in the Imperial Chapel. "I was anxious not to miss an opportunity likely to introduce me to Alexander," writes an English traveller, "and to the camp Court he has established here since the suspension of hostilities. I walked up the stately avenue leading to the castle. All the windows were open. Suddenly the sounds of majestic music struck my ear, as if one of the finest organs in Europe was brought for the occasion. Guided by the sound, I found the way to the room used as a chapel. A crowd of princes, royal and noble, of marshals, generals, ambassadors, and others, all glittering with embroidered epaulettes, stars, crosses, and gold lace, almost completely filled it. The remarkable plainness of his dress and his tall and commanding figure distinguished Alexander from all present. Although it was the first time I saw him I knew him at once. The room was not large, and at last, to my amazement, I discovered the sound issued from among a group of fifteen or twenty persons ranged together in one of the corners of the chapel. They chanted the service without a moment's interval. Such an effect produced by the union of human voices I had certainly never conceived, nor have I since in any of the numerous parts of the globe I have visited found anything which could give even the remotest idea of it. I was afterwards informed that those singers of the Imperial Chapel were picked out from among millions."

thoughts of the continental system, as he now considered it an impracticable one. "It is the Emperor's intention," he said, "to conclude a peace with Russia in every way glorious to her, which shall deprive Austria of all influence in Europe, &c. The Emperor wishes to place himself in such a situation as to prevent the possibility of any future dispute with Russia." But Alexander refused to see Caulaincourt, or to treat with France except through Austria; and on July 18th Metternich had a very stormy interview at Dresden with Napoleon, who offered to give Illyria to Austria if she would only be neutral; that was all he asked. Metternich told him it was now impossible, and stated the concessions required by the Allies: Poland to Russia; Saxony to Prussia; the independence of Holland, Switzerland, and the Papal States; Illyria and Northern Italy to Austria; and the dissolution of the Confederation of the Rhine. Napoleon said if he yielded these demands he should lose his throne. He "knew Austria could not go to war, and he would never forget that she proposed humiliating conditions; he would be in Vienna early in September, for she was a fertile country, and his army should winter there. The Russians and Prussian troops were very fine, and fought well, but they had no head, and he would beat them, and Austria should never forget the visit he would now make." The Congress was prolonged till August 10th, and the next day Napoleon agreed, at Caulaincourt's urgent request, to the modified terms proposed by Austria, which stipulated for herself Illyria, including Trieste, and a third of Poland—the rest to be divided between Prussia and Russia; the restoration of all her severed provinces to Prussia, with a secure frontier on the Elbe, and the independence of the Hanseatic towns; but he was informed it was too late. A beacon-fire on the White Mountain in Bohemia, and a glare of blazing signals from every neighbouring hill, declared the armistice to be at an end, and 100,000 Russians and Prussians were crossing the Austrian frontier to join the Austro-Hungarian army at Prague. They could not be foiled with impunity; Austria had sent in her adhesion to the alliance with his enemies, and Napoleon must again appeal to the sword. "This acceptance," said Metternich, "would have ensured peace on the 10th, but nothing can now be done

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without consulting Alexander, who is hourly expected at Prague." So Austria, like Prussia, was forced by Russia to fight for her own independence.

After Bautzen Barclay replaced Wittgenstein in the chief command, and declared to the Emperor that he could not coalesce the convalescents with the other troops in the field. He must return to Poland. The Prussians were aghast. What would become of Prussia now if her allies withdrew beyond the Vistula, and left her to the French? Barclay shrugged his shoulders, and said he could not sacrifice his armies,* as they were not in fighting condition. In six weeks he would be there again, and in the mean time the Prussian army must take care of itself. But Alexander decided the point on the score of Austria, and the dispute reconciled him to the armistice, which would give his armies the required time and rest. If they retired into Poland, Austria without doubt would at once join France. Barclay was obliged to submit; but the idea being entertained showed the necessity for Alexander to remain with his army, and that those (among the Austrians especially) who wished to drive him back to Russia were more the friends of Napoleon than of the Allies. But as he was responsible to no human being, they found it convenient to lay every fault and every retreat to his account; and Wilson remarks on the great jealousy exhibited towards him at the Austrian and Prussian head-quarters. Their ingratitude even went so far as to say he was actuated by vain-glorious motives in freeing Germany; the unworthy return of a mean spirit, which was not shared by either Blucher or the King. It was not the act of a vain man to relinquish his claim to the chief command† for the sake of preserving harmony, or to divide his noble army into auxiliary corps instead of keeping it together in one imposing force till he entered Paris. He might have added all Turkey and Persia to his dominions at the cost of the treasure and labour he expended on the campaign of 1813; and in such a war, justified by the non-fulfilment of the treaty of Bucharest, he could have fulfilled the ardent wishes of his subjects, and have acquired the glory

* See Muffling.

† Wilson was of opinion he would have taken the chief command if at this point of the campaign he had formed an idea of Austria and Prussia's jealousy of Russia.

which in Napoleon's estimation could only be gained by a campaign in the East. In the rash days of his youth he accepted the guarantee of the integrity of Germany, and he felt himself bound to lose no opportunity for restoring it. But his position when Austria joined the alliance, and her generals and intriguing statesmen were added to the councils of war, required the exercise of a patient forbearance which did not naturally belong to his character, and had only been attained through severe mental sufferings, and the knowledge of his duties as a Christian, with which for some time past he had been very deeply impressed.

Alexander's regular attendance at the services of his Church was supposed to be a habit imposed on him by his father, which, like other customs of the same origin, he always observed. In conformity with Paul's decrees, he was never known to wear a cloak or great-coat on parade on the coldest winter's day; and early every morning of his life, when at St. Petersburg, occupied himself with the monotonous duty of reviewing the Guard. The misfortunes of the first years of his reign, the failure of his benevolent schemes, appeared like a species of retribution, and he thought he was fated to be the ruin of his country, and that nothing would succeed which he had planned or carried out. One of his most intimate friends, Prince Alexander Galitzin, about five years his senior, had spent a wild and extravagant youth, when Alexander gave him the newly-created post of Minister of Education and Public Worship. He objected that he knew nothing of religious matters, having been educated like the Emperor, as a *philosopher*. Alexander had proclaimed religious toleration throughout his dominions, and would not allow the dissenters to be interfered with, as they had been, for political motives, during Catherine's reign. He told Galitzin his ignorance on such matters would only make him the more fit for his post, as he would enter upon it without prejudices, and all required was to settle disputes, and to see that every one had strict justice. Galitzin still declared himself unsuited for the office, requiring time to prepare for it. He asked the Archbishop Plato for a book which could teach him something of religion. The Archbishop replied the Bible. To men of Galitzin's views the Bible was as much a technical book, only intended for

priests, as a book on abstruse diseases is only intended for physicians. He opened it now for the first time, and was absorbed in its contents.

One day, in an access of unusual confidence, Alexander told Galitzin he suffered so much from depression that it was at times almost insupportable, and in the gayest assembly he often felt most miserable. Galitzin was remarkably cheerful and lively, for his serious studies in no way diminished his excellent spirits. He advised his Sovereign to read the Bible, for there he would find the consolation he so much required. The Emperor did not answer, but shortly afterwards surprised his wife by asking if she had a Bible to lend him, and she gave him a French copy, which he carried away, and, like Galitzin, read for the first time in his life. The English editor of a commentary on the New Testament sent him a copy of his work in 1807, on hearing that the Emperor encouraged the missions to Russia; and he received a letter of thanks and a valuable ring, forwarded from St. Petersburg just before Alexander set out for the Friedland campaign. Yet taught from his early years to regard Christianity as an exploded superstition, merely the romantic conceptions of the world's infancy, he afterwards stated to a German bishop that it was long before he was able to believe the truth of what he read, for that doubts continued to beset him. In the mean while his political complications increased, and there seemed no chance of warding off a life and death struggle with France. His sight had never been good from the time he was a boy, and becoming much worse at the beginning of 1812, he consulted the oculist Jung Stilling, at Vilna. This practitioner was a privy councillor of Baden, and had taken a prominent part in the evangelical revival in West Germany and Switzerland in 1810, which was influencing the Lutheran and Calvinist communities in most parts of Europe. He was an evangelical teacher himself, and took this opportunity to address a few words to the Emperor on the subject, which appeared much to interest him; for when he afterwards entered Germany with his armies he gave the strictest orders that all religious establishments and the Moravian settlements should be respected, and not used as military quarters or annoyed in any way. Perhaps it was the fact that, though pro-

fessing not to be a religious man, Alexander still acted as the protector of religion, whether exercised by the Jesuits in Russian Asia, by the Lutherans in Finland, or by the Scotch missionaries in the Caucasus and the Crimea, that made all who came near him and had especially considered the matter, hope to bring him over to their particular views; and apart from his rank he was an object of great interest to the more serious members of the Court and society of St. Petersburg. His age, which had not yet reached its prime, his kindness of heart and indefatigable exertions in the duties of his post, joined to his evident unhappiness, his lonely private life, and domestic troubles, all combined to produce this feeling; and the clouds over the empire made many regard life in a graver aspect than they had done before, and try to find a cause and a remedy for the train of national calamities which had occurred in quick succession since Alexander came to the throne. This cause they thought lay in the prevalence of infidelity. Count de Maistre, a man of sixty years old, much respected in St. Petersburg, gradually drew this current of feeling towards the Roman Catholic Church, and perhaps even hoped to attract the Emperor. His pupil, Madame Svetchine, was very intimate with the Imperial family, but at nineteen withdrew from the world of fashion to devote herself to works of charity; and St. Petersburg sustained a great loss when she took up her abode in Paris, where she occupied a conspicuous position among the philanthropists and devotees of the French city. A young Greek, maid of honour to the Empress Elizabeth, Mdle. Stourdza, was her friend and correspondent, and the Countess Tolstoi, whose husband's duties gave her rooms in the palace, formed one of the same circle. The Count, an old courtier of Catherine, more than once took upon himself to speak to the Emperor. In April, 1812, Alexander was preparing to set off for Vilna. It was his custom when he was going a long journey to start at four A.M.; and as he should have time to rest in his carriage, to spend the previous night in transacting business. On this occasion he was alone, and having taken leave of his family was arranging his papers and writing down some directions before he took his departure, when he was surprised by the entrance of the Countess Tolstoi, and expressed some astonishment at her unseasonable intrusion.

She excused herself, and putting a paper into his hand, begged him to read it, saying there he would find the only source of human comfort, and wished him good-bye. He thanked her, put it into his pocket, and resumed his occupations, and then travelled two days and a night without stopping to rest or change his clothes. He arrived at his journey's end weary and dispirited, and when he retired for the evening and took off his coat, found the paper in his pocket, and saw it was a copy of the 91st Psalm. Shortly afterwards, having passed several restless nights, he requested a priest who was attached as chaplain to his head-quarters to read him to sleep. The priest began the 91st Psalm, and it struck Alexander as almost a providential coincidence to point out his only real ally. From that time he made a rule of reading three chapters in the Bible every day, and continued this practice throughout the campaigns of 1812, 1813, 1814; indeed, for the rest of his days, trying to conform his life to the precepts there inculcated; and his attendants* soon perceived he took more trouble to restrain his naturally warm temper when irritated by surrounding circumstances. This train of thought had undoubtedly a great effect on his policy, and on the future of Europe, especially France. It was deepened by the calamities of 1812; but religion supplied a balm he had found in nothing else, and for a time restored his spirits to a greater degree of cheerfulness, and kept off the attacks of depression, which had almost amounted to despair.

The Emperor's sentiments found an echo even in the most frivolous society in St. Petersburg. There was hardly a family who had not lost friends or property in the war. Many looked upon the country as virtually lost when the French reached Moscow—lost through the Divine displeasure at its neglect of the Giver of its prosperity. A day of national humiliation was proclaimed; and when the French armies were driven back, and the empire left free without having been compelled to sign a disgraceful peace, there was a reactionary feeling of gratitude at an unexpected release, and the sudden suspension

* His attendants began to fear that the teaching of Father Grueber, a Jesuit priest who had been much at the Court in Paul's reign, was beginning to tell upon Alexander, and that he would become a Roman Catholic.

of a well-merited punishment. All Russia may be said to have sat in dust and ashes, and for some time the effect remained. The churches began to fill, philanthropical societies were set on foot, and Prince Lieven, Prince Galitzin, Count Tolstoi, Count Kotchoubey, and others gave their serious attention to these subjects. An English missionary came to Russia in 1812 to distribute translations of the Bible among those heathen and Mahometan tribes in the empire not yet converted to the orthodox faith. He first applied to these noblemen for permission, and they advised him to send his request direct to the Emperor, who read the paper very carefully, and observed he only regretted that, though the Tartars and Kalmucks were to have the Bible in their own language, nothing was to be done for the Russians. "But we will see," he added, "how the present plan succeeds; if it is well received, we can afterwards have them included." He gave his formal sanction to it by appending his usual signature—"So be it.—ALEXANDER." Some of the Senators and the Holy Synod objected to the permission afterwards given to translate the Bible into modern Russian, as hitherto all sacred books were written in the old Slavonic tongue; but the Emperor, disregarding them, furnished the English Bible Society with a large house in St. Petersburg, and supported it by magnificent donations. A branch was established in Moscow, where the old torture-chamber of an earlier day was set aside for the purpose. Prince Galitzin's sister, the Princess Mestchersky, went there in 1813 to interest the returning nobility in its cause. She published "An Address to the Afflicted," and subsequently ninety-three pamphlets on religious and moral subjects, both original and translated from foreign writers, distributing 400,000 copies. She expended 10,000 roubles from her own means in this purpose, and the Emperor privately assisted her with 12,000 roubles at different times. A few years later a Scotch missionary settlement was established among the wild tribes in Siberia at the Emperor's expense. But as religious zeal set in, so controversies and disputes began, which had long been unknown in Russia; and Alexander soon had cause to repent of his toleration when the claims of the Church of which he was the head were set before him, and opposed or derided by the strong sectarianism of the Protestants, and secretly under-

mined by the Jesuits, while all were used as political levers, and made the foundation or excuse for disorders in the empire.

In the spring of 1813 the Empress asked to join her husband in Germany, but he said she ought not to be subjected to the fatigues and hardships of a camp life, and the result of the war was still too uncertain to render it safe for her to take up her residence in any of the towns. Early in the summer she left St. Petersburg for Riga, where she remained a short time, and then went on to Königsberg, Weimar, and Berlin, to visit her German relatives, as those districts were gradually insured from the probability of another French invasion. Finally she arrived at her mother's residence at Bruchsal, and at her brother's palaces in Baden and Carlsruhe at the beginning of 1814.

Although the feelings of the Russians at the seat of war, when they saw themselves surrounded by lukewarm or suspicious allies, were decidedly in favour of peace, the reflecting portion of the community in St. Petersburg and Moscow were anxious for their Sovereign to redeem his pledge to his people, and avenge the injuries perpetrated in the empire. They felt that no permanent truce would be obtained, and no safety from the intrigues of their enemies, till Russia had asserted her supremacy, and could re-form the map of Europe. The news of the armistice was received with consternation, as it was feared it might lead to an unsatisfactory peace, and in Moscow those beginning to rebuild stopped their works.

"The expenses of the army," writes De Maistre, "have increased the Russian budget by 58,000,000 roubles." (He had just returned from a very interesting ceremony.) "1200 Spanish prisoners,* rescued by timely succour from the wreck of the Grand Army at Vilna, had taken the oath to the Spanish Constitution and to Ferdinand; and the Spanish minister at St. Petersburg, addressing them, said their countrymen had conquered civil liberty—the greatest blessing men can enjoy. It was received with loud hurrahs from those same men whose grandfathers would have been knouted to death if they had read a book where those words were written. At this moment Alexander proclaims in Germany that he is fighting for the

* They were found by Alexander in its hospitals, and clothed and maintained for a year at his expense.

honour and liberty of man. These proclamations are more terrible than those of the generals who, fifteen or twenty years ago, proclaimed war to thrones."

After all the preparations Austria professed to be making, she only joined the Allies with 45,000 men, not much more than she lent as auxiliaries to France in the campaign of 1812; and Cathcart says, during the whole war she never brought forward more than 50,000. As the English Government paid her a subsidy on condition that she produced 200,000, she swelled them out on paper to the utmost extent; and Lord Burghersh, in his work on this war, has mistaken her false estimates for the real force of the Allies. The Prussians raised their armies to 90,000, and in addition supported many irregular bands throughout the country. The Swedes, who were hardly ever engaged, consisted of 25,000 men; and the Russians and Cossacks amounted to 125,000 men,* besides the German legion they had drilled and organized. Of these forces, the corps commanded by Barclay, the guards and grenadiers under Miloradovitz, and the cavalry of reserve under Constantine, bringing up the number to 80,000 Russians, were attached to the Allied Grand Army, as it was termed, and intended to take the most active part in the war. The Prussian corps of Kleist, counting 25,000, and the Austrian army of 45,000, were also united to this central force, which was accompanied by the Czar and the King of Prussia, with their ministers, and for a short time by the Emperor of Austria. The army of Silesia consisted of Blücher's corps of 45,000 men, and a corps of Russians under Langeron, amounting to 33,000, who assisted throughout in all Blücher's operations and triumphs, and were under his chief command. The army of the North, under Bernadotte, was composed of his Swedes, a corps of 20,000 Prussians under Bülow, a Russian corps of 8000 under General Vinzingerode, another under Voronzov of 4000, and the German legions of 19,000 men. About 10,000 of these acted as

* "Three days since," says Wilson, "the Emperor inspected 4200 new troops and twenty squadrons of cavalry. They had marched as recruits since November from Yaroslaf, &c., *via* St. Petersburg, where they were trained, and they themselves and their appointments appeared as if they had not moved further than from barracks to the parade during that time."

partisan corps under Voronzov, Czernichef, and others. The rest were intrusted with the task of protecting Berlin, which Napoleon planned to take by a sudden blow immediately after the armistice.*

Alexander requested the British Government to make a diversion in the south of France, and a despatch, July 5th, 1813, to Lord Cathcart, informed him this should be done; but the activity he infused into the military departments of his own empire by no means existed in the British War Office, and the diversion was not made until it was no longer necessary, and the Allies on the point of entering Paris.

It was an easier task with Napoleon to recruit his forces than with Russia, as his resources were more concentrated, and the whole system of France was now resolved into the art of producing soldiers and the means of war. But so much carelessness was shown in the way in which they were forwarded, often in chains, to the dépôts, that on more than one occasion they were actually starved to death on the road. He wrote to St. Cyr, August 17th, 1813, mentioning in detail the numbers and position of his armies. "It is clear that 400,000 men, resting on such a chain of fortresses as those of the Elbe, and which may at pleasure debouch by Dresden, Torgau, Wittenberg, and Magdeburg, are not to be turned." Jomini stated that he had 400,000 men with 1250 pieces of cannon at the recommencement of the campaign, and Cathcart shows that the Allies were at least 90,000 men less than their opponents; though at St. Helena Napoleon tried to show that they had copied his own mode of warfare, and that he

* Sir George Cathcart. Lord Burghersh did not join the army till it had entered France.

Lord Bathurst wrote to Wellington in Spain, June 23rd, 1814, that he thinks unless the armistice concluded in Germany for fifteen days is followed by a peace, it will not allow Bonaparte to send troops to Spain. "Alexander would not listen to a longer armistice, and declined to receive Caulaincourt. It was originally proposed by Bonaparte. Austria was looking to her own aggrandizement, and seems unlikely to give her real goodwill to the Allies, but if she only joined them in name it would be something. There is a party at head-quarters led by Stein against the Crown Prince of Sweden. He had his objects, and if he cannot get them by being the ally of Russia he will try the reverse. The Allies, notwithstanding their retreat, have their spirits unshaken. Several successes in their retreat had encouraged them. The worst was the jealousy among the generals, and the want of any person whom all would gladly obey. The Russians will never submit long to be commanded by a German," &c.

was borne down by the mere preponderance of force; but the authority of men of unblemished honour like the English officers with the Allies, added to the testimony of his own generals and his own letters, is worth more than the subsequent inventions with which he sought to influence history. "Blucher," he said at that period, "was without talent as a general, and committed a thousand faults;* Wellington was at sieges a mere executioner—I should pronounce him to be a man of little mind, without generosity, and without greatness of soul. Such I know to be the opinion of Benjamin Constant and of Madame de Staël, who said that, except as a general, he had not two ideas; as to anything else, I think that history will pronounce him to be '*un homme borné*.'" Of his opponents, Kutuzov was almost the only one whom he credited with military capacity, and we have seen how much he owed to this general after Borodino and in the marches of the Beresina.

Bernadotte's disregard to his orders to protect Hamburg naturally increased the suspicions of his allies. He left Davoust to carry out his master's directions unopposed, and the city was punished tenfold for its readiness to receive the enemies of the French. Sixteen hundred families were turned out of their homes, and 400 patients out of the hospitals into the snow; the bank plundered of 400,000*l.*, besides the contribution fixed by Napoleon; the principal inhabitants shot; several women, conspicuous for their patriotism, flogged; and other acts perpetrated equally disgraceful to a civilized age. In addition, Bernadotte sent back 120 French officers from Stralsund on parole, to gain partisans in France. As Napoleon rewarded his officers when they broke their parole, which they did very frequently, the Allies had agreed that all prisoners captured should be retained, unless fairly exchanged. Sir Charles Stewart was therefore sent to Stralsund to keep a watch upon him, and to request him to meet the Sovereigns at Trachenberg, thirty miles from Breslau, to consult on a plan for the approaching campaign.

* There was much truth in these remarks on Blucher and Schwartzberg, most military critics agree.

"It was no secret to Europe," writes Baron Muffling, "that old Prince Blucher understood nothing whatever of the conduct of a war."—*Passages in My Life*.

It has been said that the Sovereigns believed Napoleon could only be beaten by his own generals who had learned his system of warfare, and that Bernadotte and Moreau drew up the plan for the war. This is an acknowledged error. Moreau had not yet arrived, and when he came was not long enough on the scene of action to take any share in the operations. The reason he was summoned to Germany has been explained. It was necessary to Russia to keep Sweden in good humour, and draw her armies away from her own empire ; so Bernadotte's alliance would have been equally courted if he had been a native Swede. The chief part he took in the conference was to ask for the supreme command of the Silesian army, over Blucher as well as of the North, which was refused ; though Bulow was placed under his command. The plans he proposed were entirely impracticable, unless Napoleon was to be given the opportunity of cutting off each detached corps in detail. But as Marshal Augereau said to Fouché, " We have taught the Allies to beat us. At Lutzen our centre was broken, several regiments dispersed, and all had been lost but for the Young Guard. After such a butchery as that at Bautzen there were no results, no cannon taken, no prisoners. The enemy everywhere opposed us with advantage. We were roughly handled at Reichenbach, the day after the battle." The Russians had fought so frequently against Napoleon and the same generals now led to oppose them, that their commanders had learned his manœuvres, and in this campaign more than once turned them successfully against the French. They had relinquished one primitive custom of warfare after another, such as unbuckling their knapsacks in the face of the enemy, and setting them in front of their ranks before they began to load, as at Austerlitz, and arming their irregular forces with bows and arrows. Their commissariat was properly supplied, their medical staff excellent, and their weapons and artillery as good as any in Europe.* They differed as essentially from Catherine's

* The lively and not very accurate Dr. Clarke asserts in 1800, "that the guns manufactured in Russia are of so bad a quality that it is wonderful any troops can use them ; besides being clumsy and heavy, they miss five times out of six, and are liable to burst whenever discharged." If this statement was correct it may account for Suvorov's preference for the use of the bayonet.

armies less than eighteen years before, as the Sepoy armies differed from the British troops in the rebellion in India in 1857, and the care Alexander had bestowed upon them during many years was at last to bear fruit. After the armistice the allied armies concentrated in the rear of the enemy's position, either to cut through his communications or to march straight on Dresden. The Silesian army had orders to avoid engagements as much as possible till reinforced by the Russian reserves under Benningsen, who had not reached the Niemen; it was to approach the Elbe, and strive to pass the river between Torgau and Leipsic, to join with Bernadotte, who received directions to leave 20,000 men to drive Davoust out of Hamburg, and advance himself towards Leipsic. A plan was also prepared in case Napoleon made a grand attack on either army; but he thought the Russians would not sacrifice their communications with Russia, and that he should meet them in Silesia; another division of his army was to advance at all risks to capture Berlin; and if these two movements were successful, he might march into Bohemia to defeat the Austrians, when Prague and Vienna would lie at his mercy. This was exactly what the Allies expected, as they had learned by experience, that to strike at an enemy's capital was almost invariably his first object.

Another point much discussed at the meeting at Trachenberg and also at Prague, was the chief command of the allied army; and it was only Alexander's disinterested and conciliating disposition which prevented it from leading to almost a separation of the Allies. "The Emperor Alexander's personal intrepidity, perseverance, and firmness," says Lord Londonderry, "entitled him to great consideration in this respect; and my impression is, had Austria consented to place the whole of the allied forces under his orders, there would have been a unity of design productive of beneficial results. The King of Prussia was not disinclined to this opinion. Considering the temper of the Russians if they became dissatisfied, it did not appear the least advisable arrangement. Austria was desirous of an Austrian for the military command. A certain degree of jealousy of Russia on political points operated against her yielding to the Emperor's wishes."*

* General Mitchel says: "From all we have been able to learn, the

Moreau pressed strongly on Alexander the necessity of claiming the chief command.

The very fact that it was fear of Russia which at last induced Austria to join the Allies augured ill for her sincere support in a war intended to destroy Russia's only rival in Europe; and it is now acknowledged that it was her object throughout the campaign to prevent Napoleon from being crushed. She had no wish to overturn his dynasty; for the accession of his son, with Maria Louisa as Regent, would turn France into Austria's natural ally. Schwartzberg was placed over the command of the Austrian corps, and pressed upon the Allies by the Austrian Cabinet for the general-in-chief. He carried secret orders not to proceed beyond Châtillon in France, nor to cross the Seine; and his appointment alone was a proof of Austria's inclination to aid France as much as was consistent with her own safety. He was one of the officers most hostile to the Russians at Austerlitz. He was appointed to command the Austrian contingent in the Russian campaign on account of his strong feeling for France; and since then he had visited Paris, and been thanked and rewarded for his services by Napoleon. Except on that occasion he had never held a high appointment, and sustained a defeat from Tormassof, who was now placed *under* his command. It has been said that the Austrians thought themselves insulted by the appointment of Moreau on Alexander's staff; but was not the appointment of Schwartzberg an equal insult to the Czar? However, Alexander was not apt to take offence, or to stand much upon his own dignity; and though he saw the Austrian design, he deemed it more advantageous to the general cause to give his consent to their demands; for as long as he remained with his army he could infuse into it the necessary energy. And Schwartzberg, a man who had never command of the army was actually pressed upon the Emperor, but he declined the offer, though he always took an active part in the field, as well as in the correspondence relating to military operations." Alison writes, on the authority of Lord Cathcart: "It was soon painfully evident that no cordial co-operation on their part (the Austrian) could be hoped for if Alexander were invested with the supreme command. In these circumstances that generous and noble prince, though not without a severe pang, relinquished his claim. But though another was placed at the nominal head of affairs, it was impossible to deprive the Emperor Alexander of the weight which he possessed as the head of the largest and most experienced portion of the allied forces," &c.

yet gained a great victory, was placed over generals who had scattered the French legions in Russia. Napoleon rejoiced when he heard of the appointment. "Schwartzenberg," he said, "is slow and methodical. It will take him a week to bring his columns into line of battle." He calculated that long before the Allies advanced against either of the chief posts of the French army, he should have time to crush Blucher and afterwards meet Schwartzenberg on the road.

"Alexander's colossal power* and great reputation, his unexampled sacrifices and the unparalleled successes with which his efforts were crowned, his personal courage and tried energy of character, all conspired to give weight to his claim. It seemed difficult to conceive on what grounds it could be resisted; especially as the Archduke Charles, the only general in the allied armies whose experience or exploits could render him a fit competitor, was kept at a distance by the unhappy dissensions which prevailed for some years in the Imperial family of Austria." But it was the power and energy of Alexander which alarmed the Austrian Cabinet, and made him in their eyes most ill suited for the post. Was it not proverbial that the desire for military glory increases with its gratification? Did he not already require a clog to his ambition rather than a supreme authority which might act as a spur? He had only reached the half of the allotted years of man, and what would become of Europe if for thirty-five years more he exercised the predominating influence over the affairs of the Continent, which he would infallibly obtain if the allied armies were placed at his disposal, to lead as he chose till he had conquered France? Napoleon's frequent warnings rang in the Austrian ears—that the real enemy she had to fear was Russia, and if he were to die Alexander would be his successor in Europe. The Czar's proclamation to the Germans also displeased Francis, who, remembering he had given a constitution to Servia and the Ionian Isles, used to speak of him as "the Liberal Autocrat," and his "Jacobin brother of Russia." He answered a deputation from Italy, "that there could be no independence and no constitution in a country conquered by his arms." Throughout the campaign it was the object of the Austrian generals and ministers to

* Sir Charles Stewart.

worry and thwart Alexander till they drove him back to Russia ; and Schwartzberg excused his own slowness and timid proceedings on the ground that "he was constantly trembling for the personal safety of the Sovereigns," and that "there was no commanding with Emperors and Kings on the spot."

But the Czar's example of taking ostensibly the second place in the command had a good effect on his generals, discontented at being placed under Blucher and Bernadotte. Langeron and Sacken, now subordinate to Blucher, had been more successful in war than the old German, who, in spite of his reputation, had never met with anything but defeat. They termed him an illiterate soldier, distinguished only for brute courage, and blamed his conduct at Bautzen. It was indisputable that they possessed more education and science. The Russian generals attached to Bernadotte were satisfied by being employed on independent service, which they ably discharged ; and Pozzo di Borgo, Napoleon's bitter enemy, was placed with Sir Charles Stewart at the Prince's headquarters, whence Alexander resisted all efforts to remove him. The suspicions early entertained were proved by this skilful diplomatist to be well founded ; and a celebrated French actress made herself the medium of secret communication between Bernadotte and Napoleon. He openly expressed his objection to the Austrian alliance, and angrily demanded the chief command, telling Sir Charles Stewart that he himself was "one of the greatest generals of his age." But with a man risen from the ranks, a little civility on the part of a crowned head goes very far ; and Alexander tried it as successfully at Trachenberg as he had done at Abo, and kept him nominally with the Allies.

On August 16th Moreau arrived at Prague with Svinine, a Russian attaché, from America. He stopped at Stralsund to see Bernadotte, and told him that his great object was to restore to the French the political rights and the liberty of which they had been deprived. The prince prevented him from entering the Russian service by saying, "Take care ! the French would never recognize the hero of Hohenlinden under a Russian uniform." At Prague he was well received by the Czar, and very courteously by Francis, who thanked him "for

the moderation he had shown on every occasion during the campaigns on the Rhine ;” but his position was unpleasant, for the commander-in-chief showed great jealousy of him, and the Prussians and Russians were heard to declare, that whatever success they might have now it would all be attributed to Moreau. He refused to take an active command unless the white cockade was publicly raised and the Bourbons proclaimed : perhaps he thought it was useless to ask for the tricolour among an assembly of sovereigns ; so he was only appointed Alexander’s aide-de-camp ; and the sole document remaining to show his views and opinions of this war is a memorandum delivered by him to Alexander during the march to Dresden, “ and nothing,” says General Mitchel, “ can be more superficial or further below its author’s reputation.” Scarcely a fortnight elapsed between his arrival at head-quarters and the moment when he received his mortal wound.*

General Jomini joined the allied army about the same time as Moreau. A Swiss by birth, he was one of the officers in the Swiss army obliged by treaty to serve with France. He wrote a book on military tactics, which he showed to the Russian chargé d’affaires at Paris in 1801, hoping it would obtain him an appointment in the Russian army, but the Russian refused to attend to his request. A quarrel with Berthier induced him to resign his commission in 1809, and Alexander offered him service in Russia, which he had already accepted when he was recalled to France. After the battle of Bautzen he resigned his commission, owing to some dispute with Napoleon, and passed over to Russia. He thought Alexander was almost superstitious as regarded his own ill-luck in war, and tried to circumvent Fate by letting others take the credit of what he had himself proposed, and they were always ready to do it when it turned out a success. Moreau said Alexander had that uncommon fault, an excess of modesty. “ He stated to me,” he added, “ in an hour or two the events of the pre-

* Alexander’s letter to Moreau while in America was as follows:—
“ M. le Général Moreau,—Knowing the sentiments which animate you, I propose to you to join me, and have pleasure in assuring you that my object will be to render your position as satisfactory as circumstances will permit, without in any case requiring you to put your conduct in opposition to your principles. Be assured, M. le Général Moreau, of my affection and esteem.—ALEXANDER.”

ceding campaign in a manner so precise, so clear, and with observations so just, and comments so profound, that I fancied I was listening to one of the oldest and most experienced generals. I asked him the most detailed questions, and he explained to me all the manœuvres and the marches of the armies, so as to supply whatever was incomplete or obscure in the official reports—the only documents I had read in America on the subject.” Moreau was altogether very much attracted by Alexander, and hearing a general speak of him as “the best of princes,” he answered briskly, “You might say, sir, the best of men.”

Among other princesses the young Charlotte of Prussia (the late Empress of Russia) had arrived at Prague, as the safest place during the war, and her father and Alexander came there August 15th. “Sire,” said Francis to the Czar, “I put between your hands my person, my army, and my States.” The Republican generals, accustomed to Napoleon’s heavy ceremonial, were surprised at the simple manner in which they were introduced to two powerful sovereigns. Alexander and Frederick William walked to Moreau’s quarters the day after he arrived, and Alexander said to the general, “General Moreau, the King of Prussia,” when Frederick immediately entered into a friendly conversation with him; and their reception by the Emperor of Austria was conducted with as little form. Jomini dined with the allied generals, when the King asked him a question about Napoleon’s forces. He declined to answer further than that they were much more considerable than the Allies; and Alexander came to his relief by saying, though they were glad to make use of him, they did not want to make him betray his old friends.*

* In the *Reminiscences of King Leopold* he states that, “he was the first German prince who joined the liberating army when at Kalisch, and on the demand of Constantine, his brother-in-law, who commanded the Guards, he was attached to his staff. The Russian army was much weakened by the fatigues of the winter campaign . . . King Frederick William III. was known, though dreadfully maltreated, to come with great reluctance to any decision, and took in general gloomy views of everything.” On coming to Kalisch he expressed to Prince Leopold his apprehension that the Russian army would not be strong enough when the French re-organized army should advance. The Prince shared the King’s misgiving on that subject. He declares the allied army was “not beaten” either at Lutzen or Bautzen. “The Emperor of Austria feared the breaking out of a war, and to the last moment of the armistice ex-

When the stipulated six days' neutrality at the close of the armistice expired, the Allied Grand Army, with Alexander and the King, entered Saxony in four columns, through the only four practicable passes in the range of wooded mountains which skirt Bohemia, and Wittgenstein engaged one of St. Cyr's detachments, driving it from its posts. In the evening he attacked a French entrenched camp at Pirna with the bayonet, and threw back General Bonnet's division upon Dresden, his advanced guard following the enemy to the suburbs, where the French had greatly strengthened the fortifications during the armistice, and cut down the trees in its streets and public gardens for palisades.

In the mean while Napoleon moved on towards Silesia and engaged Blücher, but hearing of the march on Dresden, hastily returned. His letters to St. Cyr show he had expected this, and estimated his army at 180,000. Moreau's advice was not to attack Dresden,* which would fall of itself when the French armies were defeated elsewhere; but the question was decided without him, in a conference between the Sovereigns and generals, and accorded with Jomini's opinion, he being supposed to know more about Napoleon's plans than he chose to impart. When the attack was decided it was important to begin it at once, before the reinforcements under Napoleon could come up; but Schwartzberg was as dilatory as old Kutuzov, without the excuse of his infirmities, and had political reasons for not submitting Dresden to an assault. The Prussians under Kleist made a considerable advance in the suburbs on August 26th, but there was no general engagement, as Schwartzberg insisted on waiting for a corps of young recruits under Klenau, and in the evening the cannonading was heard of a battle near Königstein, between Vandamme, on his advance to the relief of the city, and the division under

pressed the hope that Napoleon would give way." At the beginning of 1812 Germany had been in "the lowest and most humiliating position."

"During the armistice the Emperor Alexander wished to see his sister-in-law, the Grand Duchess Anna Federovna. Prince Leopold arranged the meeting, which took place at Blasdorff, in Silesia, in a pretty château. The Emperor had gone there quite alone, and it was interesting to see him so. He was extremely amiable."

* Cathcart. Wilson also says Alexander and Moreau were averse to the attack, wishing to push on, and Jackson says Jomini's advice prevailed over the generals.

Count Osterman Tolstoi, posted twelve miles in the rear, to keep open communications with Blucher. He kept up such a vigorous fire from his batteries commanding the road to Dresden, that when Napoleon arrived with his Guards, fighting their way, he got out of his carriage and crept along the ground on his hands and knees over the most exposed part, while the bullets and bombshells flew over his head.

When Napoleon's army had passed into Dresden, increasing its forces to nearly 131,000 men, and sufficient time had elapsed to enable the French Emperor to make every disposition for the defence, Schwartzenberg's patience, which had held out two days, seemed exhausted, and he gave orders for the attack. In company with Alexander and the King he examined the field of battle very carefully from a hill above the town on the evening of the 25th, yet insisted, contrary to all representations, in extending his left wing over a wide open ground without support, and massing the reserve cavalry behind the centre, already protected by a hill crowned with cannon. But with any arrangement his army was not sufficiently strong to attack so large a force sheltered by regular redoubts, and every house in the suburbs turned into a battery.

The hostile forces were arranged like two semicircles, the inner bow, that of the French, being less than three miles from right to left, and the outer bow, the Allies, nearly six. The French were stronger than was necessary for a mere defence, and their concentration gave them great advantage in an attack on the weakest point of their assailants.

Schwartzenberg posted Wittgenstein on the extreme right, on the plain between the Pirna road and the Elbe. This corps opposed Napoleon's entrance into the city, and was ordered to guard against a possible attack by Vandamme; but Napoleon, expecting to drive the Allies from Saxony, ordered his general to guard the passes through the mountains into Bohemia, and, as he expressed it, to wrest the sword from the conquered, for which service, if skilfully performed, Vandamme was to receive a marshal's staff. The Prussian corps of Kleist, already in possession of the suburb of Grosse Garten, was placed on the Pirna road, next to Wittgenstein, and then the Austrian corps of General Chastelar. A rivulet, called the Weisseritz, separated Chastelar's corps from two more

Austrian divisions, commanded by Bianchi and Giulay; then came the only portion of Klenau's recruits yet arrived—men who had never been under fire, and who formed the extreme left of the army in front of a wide plain, and with hardly any support. The Prussian Guards were placed in the rear of Kleist; and Constantine with the Russian cavalry reserves to his left, and separated from Colloredo's Austrians by a small village called Strehlen.

There was a fog on the morning of the battle, and heavy rain began to fall about midnight, continuing through the day. Under cover of the mist, Murat at the head of 10,000 cavalry, and Victor with 20,000 infantry, issued unperceived from the Frederickstadt suburb on the extreme left of the Allies, and the first, taking a circuitous route, gained the rear of the Austrians to make the attack. The whole left wing, engaged in the front by Victor, and overrun from the rear by the cavalry, was defeated with great loss, and nearly all the young Austrian recruits were either killed or taken prisoners. Two regiments of the Austrian reserve suffered severely: General Androssi and 30 Austrian officers were killed, 138 officers wounded, and two generals, 59 other officers, and more than 10,000 soldiers were taken prisoners. Chastelar at last detached another division to its assistance, which rallied the remnant of the left wing; but the Freyberg road was opened to the enemy. As soon as Napoleon heard of Murat's advance, he ordered a general attack to be made on the right wing, where Mortier and St. Cyr, commanding 80,000 men, opposed Wittgenstein and Kleist. The first held his ground firmly, and took 500 prisoners. The Prussians were driven from Grosse Garten, though they remained before it, the King's brother fighting in their front; but the continued torrents of rain made the artillery almost useless, the Austrian muskets—hastily made, and probably originally bad—missed fire or burst in the soldiers' hands, so that most of the French killed and wounded were struck with the bayonet. The Russian reserves had not been engaged, and Alexander and Schwartzenberg sent Jomini to direct Barclay to move forward and crush a large French column advanced into the plain far enough, it was thought, to be assailable before it could retreat under cover of the city. Schwartz-

berg rode off to examine into the Austrian repulse, "concerning which," says Cathcart, "the most discreet concealment was long afterwards observed;" and Alexander rode down the front between Lord Cathcart and General Moreau, towards the point where the intended attack was to take place. They suddenly turned directly to the front, attracted by a movement of Russian cavalry; and Alexander was speaking to Moreau, who at the moment was about half a horse's length in advance of him, when a cannon-shot struck Moreau in the right leg, and going through the horse, shattered his left knee. The horse plunged forward about thirty yards, and fell dead. His aide-de-camp, riding behind them, rushed forward to extricate him from it. "Tell the Emperor," he said, "that I am willing to sacrifice my limbs in his service, for his cause is just." Alexander rode at once to the spot where he was lying, and told the Cossacks of his guard to form a litter for his removal to a place of safety by passing their pikes through some cloaks. He then turned his horse, and proceeded at a walk, conversing with Lord Cathcart, towards some high ground, where he could superintend the attack with the reserve. He seemed much affected by the accident; but the statement that the fall of Moreau diverted his attention from the matter in hand, and was the cause of the attack not taking place, is an error: he left Moreau carefully attended, and Dr. Wylie performed amputation of both legs almost immediately. He did not see him again till Schwartzenberg, much against his wish, resolved on a retreat.*

It has been said that Napoleon pointed the gun himself which killed Moreau, and he told his followers at St. Helena that he pointed the same gun against St. Priest with the same success; but Cathcart, who was on the spot, corrects this story, and thought it was particularly intended for Alexander,

* "Towards the middle of the day," says Sir C. Stewart in his despatch to the British Government, "a catastrophe occurred which awakened more than ordinary sensibility and regret throughout the allied army. General Moreau, in earnest conversation with the Emperor of Russia on the operations, had both his legs carried off by a cannon-shot, the ball going through his horse. . . . At Dresden, owing to the torrents of rain which deluged the country, the Allies could not make use of the greater part of their artillery, which was sunk in the bad roads. General Moreau and the Emperor were passing behind a Prussian battery, to which two French batteries were answering, one in front, the other in flank."

whom Napoleon, with reason, looked on as the soul of the Confederation, believing its discordant materials would soon be dissolved if he were removed from the scene. "Alexander," he says, "who was generally in front of his lines, had on this day been long exposed to the cannonade of shot and shells coming directly from the front;" but just before the shot which proved fatal to Moreau, the author saw a field battery shifting its ground and gaining the crest of an opposite hill. He could distinctly see through the mist the bustle of preparing for action, and therefore it could not have been more than a quarter of a mile distant. "The smoke of the first round hid it from our view, but it was a shot from the first round from that battery, directed at the leading horsemen of the group, which took effect upon Moreau, for it was not of large calibre, and came obliquely from the right. It could not have been a chance shot from one of the redoubts near Dresden, where Napoleon was present, for they were either directly in front or obliquely to our left, and at least a mile distant. The shot continued to fall thick and fast among us, coming obliquely from the right all the time we continued on that spot, and killing or wounding several of the escort;" among others Nesselrode received a contusion on the head.

Alexander and Lord Cathcart had not ridden far when Jomini met them, sent by Barclay to say the fog prevented him from seeing the first signal to move forward, and when the order arrived he considered the movement past. He represented strongly the uselessness of an attempt against the heavy masses of the enemy's infantry, sheltered as they now were by the defences of Dresden. If he brought his artillery from the height into the plain, as he must do to support his attack, it would greatly increase his difficulties in a possible retreat. The ground had also become so slippery on the hill and deep in mud on the plain, that the horses would draw it with great risk, and the powder was damp and unfit for use. The Emperor therefore countermanded the attack, and at five P.M. dismounted on the top of the hill in a ploughed field, for the rain falling more heavily than ever seemed to have suspended the fire on both sides. Schwartzberg, the King, and some of the generals joined him round a wet wood fire, hastily lighted. He thought the

French would not now attack the centre of their position, and that a decisive blow might be struck on the French left. But Schwartzberg would hear of nothing but a retreat on Bohemia, to reorganize his own army, the only division of the Allies actually defeated, or which had lost prisoners. The reserve parks of artillery and provisions had not been able to come up, through the heavy roads, and the enormous consumption of the two preceding days had nearly exhausted their ammunition. If they delayed, their last road for retreat might be occupied by Napoleon's reinforcements, as Murat's success had given the French possession of one of the principal lines towards Bohemia, Vandamme and Poniatowski occupied another, and all that remained without another contest were two inferior paths, which the rain would soon render impassable for artillery. Alexander felt it was not a moment to set Schwartzberg's authority at defiance.* It was early enough for Austria to make peace with France, and the army was in too hazardous a position to permit of an internal dispute; but he was the more annoyed at the decision as the Austrian reinforcements under Klenau arrived that very night; yet Schwartzberg persisted in the retreat, though the state of the roads compelled him to leave some of the artillery in the mud for the enemy.

As soon as the conference was ended, and Alexander had given the necessary orders to his generals, he went to see Moreau, and heard the result of his wound, and that there was scarcely a hope of saving his life. The general was transferred to a more commodious litter, with curtains, and carried to Passendorf by relays of forty Croats, escorted by some Cossacks of the guard. He complained of great pain, and was soaked with rain, but slept for a few hours, and at four A.M. of the 28th was conveyed to Doppodiswalda, where his wounds were dressed, and then the march was resumed to Toplitz.

* "The Emperor of Russia, with great reluctance, consented to withdraw; but the fact was," says Wilson, "that we should all have rotted before Dresden; it could never have been taken, with a garrison of above 200,000 men that Bonaparte could throw in or manœuvre with against us from Königstein and Torgau. What the sword and ague did not kill famine would shortly consume."

Alexander had taken no rest and scarcely any refreshment during forty-eight hours, and was drenched with the continuous rain.* The horrors of the field of battle, and the presence of the dying man, whom he had been the direct instrument in luring to his destruction, renewed the dark thoughts which often assailed him; and the fact that the general had been persuaded to quit America to accept the doubtful post of serving against his own countrymen, and was the first of his staff to be picked out as it were for death, seemed to him almost a judgment. He said to himself in the hearing of his aides-de-camp, "I am indeed the most wretched of men. Must I always carry the penalty of my sins in so cruel a manner? Wherever I go I bring misfortune to all connected with me." He told his escort he wished to be alone, and rode on first, unaccompanied, while they followed in mournful silence at a considerable distance. He halted at his old quarters at Doppodiswalda, evacuated by the rearguard early on the 28th.

Count Osterman Tolstoi rightly supposed the French would try to cut off the allied retreat on Bohemia; and fought his way with the reserves, including Constantine and 8000 cavalry, through very superior numbers, to cover the road into the mountains. He was opposed by Vandamme and Bonnet with 35,000 men; who, unable to keep him back, followed closely, and not having been informed of the retreat of the whole allied army, were tempted forward in the hope of seizing the stores and magazines at Toplitz. Their orders were precise, to march by Nollendorff, on the Pirna road, and intercept the Allies as they issued from the pass leading through Eichwald and Doppodiswalda to Dresden. If this narrow defile was debarred, the allied army, cut off from its stores, must either perish from starvation or surrender; and Toplitz, actually in sight, containing the Royal family of Prussia and the Emperor of Austria, would lie at their mercy. Unfortunately one of Osterman's corps, led by Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, was entangled in intricate paths, and lost five guns and 2000 prisoners. The remnant followed Oster-

* Colonel Hammerstein wrote to Count Münster, September 10th: "The Emperor of Russia, in the confusion before Dresden, could not get at his baggage, and was for two days with nothing to eat."

man into the plain below Nollendorff. The Russians kept close to the woody ridge, till they reached the entrance to the pass of Eichwald and Doppodiswalda; and there Osterman posted Constantine with 8000 Guards to keep it against the enemy; while with the remaining force, not above 6000 men, he kept the rest of Vandamme's division at bay to prevent it from sweeping down upon Toplitz. He sent forward a messenger to tell Francis and the King that he must hazard a battle, and was unsupported, and the last advised him to hold firm, as Alexander was still with his army in the mountains; and by his coolness preserved some degree of confidence in Toplitz, from which Francis and the diplomatists fled at once.

Vandamme finding he could make no impression on Constantine, partly sheltered by the mountains, brought his own army entirely into the plain between Kulm and Toplitz, but kept his communications open on the Nollendorff road, through which he expected Napoleon to advance. He must have prevailed over Osterman by mere weight of numbers if Alexander had not arrived through the Doppodiswalda Pass upon the plain, and seeing the state of affairs, sent Constantine and his Guards forward to support Osterman, whose men were fired with the most loyal enthusiasm when told they were protecting their Emperor, and hastened the advance of the Russian grenadiers, who had already reached the defile and were shortly engaged. Constantine led the Guards with great success, and with 8000 men checked the advance of two corps and one division of the French army under Vandamme and Bertrand.

Sir C. Stewart describes "their reckless bravery" as wanting words to express it. Vandamme was forced back upon Kulm, where he took up a position for the night in a large country-house, when a message arrived from Napoleon, acquainting him with the retreat of the Allies, and ordering him to march on Toplitz.

The same evening a great part of the allied army issued from the mountains. Some had passed on, but others were halted in their progress by the two Sovereigns, "who fortunately," says Cathcart, "on this emergency took matters a good deal into their own hands." The responsible commander-in-chief

was still occupied with the retreating columns, and did not come out of the mountains till too late. The King of Prussia sent orders to Kleist, still in the hills, "to try by the mountain paths to gain the pass of Nollendorff in the rear of the enemy." Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg (afterwards King) was the only general who knew the country, but the Cossacks proved themselves as usual excellent pioneers and spies. Osterman lost an arm in the battle of the 29th, and Barclay arriving on the 30th took the command. Coloredo with an Austrian corps had orders to make a flank movement to the right, and then to turn and attack the enemy's left, which was attended with complete success. Alexander was present, and the combined movements and a now superior force inflicted a total defeat on the French. Vandamme with six general officers, sixty cannon, and more than 7000 (some authorities say 10,000) prisoners were left with the Russians. The Prussian corps in the rear was routed by the French retreat, and Kleist even captured, but speedily rescued by the Russians who pursued the French. "The killed and wounded must have been very numerous," says Cathcart; "and although the neighbouring forest afforded the means of escape to the rest, yet few returned to serve again under Napoleon's banners, and the original first Corps d'Armée ceased to exist." By this time Marmont, Victor, and Murat, with their divisions, were in pursuit of the allied army, but halted in the mountains when they heard of Vandamme's defeat. The Allies rallied in the vale of Toplitz, which they made their head-quarters during the next six weeks.

"Never," writes Wilson, "was an action more gloriously fought. I fear, however, the loss of his Guards, added to other griefs, will exasperate the Emperor of Russia and weaken the condition of co-operation."* The splendid cavalry under Constantine's command counted 3400 killed and wounded, out of an original number of 8000. Osterman was presented the same day with the Order of St. George, but he returned for answer by the messenger who brought it, that if the Emperor wished to reward him it must be in another way, and joined the other generals in imploring him not to

* Sir G. Jackson throws doubt on some of Wilson's stories. "He does not wilfully misstate, but his imagination runs away with him."

expose himself as he had done to the risks of battle. On another occasion, during a warm encounter, Wittgenstein sent an aide-de-camp to tell him that his presence deprived the generals of the coolness necessary for military operations. "I cannot tell you," writes Madame de Svetchine to Mdle. Stourdza, "what an impression has been made here by the blow to the good cause in the person of Moreau. What a subject for the pompous exultations of the monster, and how he will make use of it to strike the minds of the French ! But when I think that it might have struck the Emperor, and what immense peril we have escaped, I own I dare no longer complain of anything. It is not only a tender uneasiness that he inspires me with when he exposes himself thus, it is real anger, stronger than any I have ever felt. It is a false idea of true courage ; and I who pass my life in pardoning erroneous ideas, feel little indulgence for this."*

Alexander had left Doppodiswalda at three A.M. with his rear-guard on August 28th, for the mountains. There he was joined by Jomini, much annoyed at the retreat from Dresden, as he had advised the attack ; and intending now he found the Emperor alone to impress on him the need of assuming the sole command. He began : "Sire, I am truly pained by the part your Majesty takes." Alexander looked up rather astonished. "General," he said, "I thank you for your zeal, but it is for me alone to judge of that." Jomini was silenced, but it left no coldness in their intercourse. In the mean while Moreau was slowly carried in the rear of the army, halting occasionally for repose and refreshment. Rapatel and Svinine, who were appointed to attend him by the Emperor with Dr. Wylie, fulfilled their charge with all possible care. On the evening of the 28th Alexander came to inquire after him, and first asking if he was asleep, dismounted to speak to him, and in a few words told him the position of the two armies. The road passed over steep declivities, and was wearisome for a man in perfect health. Alexander again came up with him on the morning of the 29th, and dismounted to speak to him, but seeing he was flushed and feverish, forbore to give him the trouble of answering, or to refer to any

* She describes the anxiety in Russia of those who had sons in the Guards.

agitating subject. He directed him to be taken to his own head-quarters, and shortly afterwards Moreau's escort descending into the valley, heard the cannonade of the battle, and saw two villages in the direction of Toplitz in flames. The General expressed great pleasure on hearing of Vandamme's capture, and said: "It is high time that monster should be put out of condition for doing harm," for Vandamme's cruelties had even excited the horror of his own men. He wished to go on to Prague, but his increasing weakness obliged his attendants to stop with him at Laun. Here he wrote a letter to his wife, telling her that three days ago he had both legs carried away by a cannon-shot. "That scoundrel Bonaparte is always lucky. The amputation was performed as well as possible. Though the army has made a retrograde movement, it is not directly backwards, but sideways, and for the sake of getting nearer Blucher. Excuse my scrawl. I love thee and embrace thee with my whole heart. I charge Rapatel to finish.—V. M."

The surgeons now ordered the General to be kept as quiet as possible, as his only hope; but the Duke of Cumberland, who was availing himself of his first opportunity for twelve years to travel on the Continent, was in Bohemia, and though unacquainted with the General, paid him a long visit, asking a multitude of questions, and talking incessantly. The attendants did not like to request him to leave, and on taking his departure, he said he wished he had formed Moreau's acquaintance on the field of battle. The General answered, they might meet there in six weeks. Metternich came a little later with a message, and stayed about ten minutes; but soon afterwards dangerous symptoms set in. He was restless, asking Svinine to write a letter to the Emperor, and at last to satisfy him he began from his dictation: "Sire, I go down to the grave with the same sentiments of admiration, respect, and devotion which your Majesty inspired me with from the first moment of our interview." At this word Moreau closed his eyes, and expired without a sigh. Alexander sent Rapatel with the corpse to St. Petersburg, to be buried in the Roman Catholic Church with the honours paid to Kutuzov. He asked Svinine some particulars of Moreau's fortune and of his wife, and telling him it would be a consolation to Madame Moreau

to see a man who was with her husband in his last moments, gave him a letter to convey to her at Brighton.* She also received from him a present of 500,000 roubles, and a pension of 30,000 (1200*l.*) a year. Napoleon had certainly considered Moreau a formidable addition to the Allies, from his popularity in France and his consistent republican sentiments, so that his arrival in the Russian camp had been carefully concealed. Being acquainted with Alexander's wish to give the French any government considered by the representatives of the nation as most suited to her peaceful development in place of that of Napoleon, Moreau, with Alexander's approval, drew up a proclamation, calling all the true and faithful sons of France to the standard of independence. Austria disliked the Bourbons, but the last spectacle she wished to see was a republic in France; and though Prussia did not share her sentiments respecting the regency of the Empress, she was perfectly agreed in her hatred of constitutions and republics. Moreau and Jomini were mistrusted by all the chiefs excepting Alexander, even the English officers and diplomatists at head-quarters seem to have shared this feeling. Muffling triumphs over the fate or uselessness of the three Frenchmen who were asked to join in subduing France. "One required to be watched by an army of 100,000 men, another lost his life in the first battle, the third failed so essentially at Dresden that his advice was never taken again." Moreau was equally hated by the old nobility and clergy of France, for he died professedly as he had lived, an infidel.

In Napoleon's order of the day after Dresden he said, "the allied army was almost dissolved in a single day. The unhappy prisoners are without clothing, and sinking under want and fatigue. Alexander did not quit the army. It even appears he commanded in person, agreeably to the instructions of two men who are traitors to their country." Alexander's order of the day after Kulm was without exaggeration. He even understated the number of soldiers who were later found to have been taken from the enemy. Vandamme with the other captured officers were brought past him, and dreading the idea of being sent to Russia, the General loudly asked

* Alexander had also written condolence letters to Madame Kutuzov and the relatives of even inferior officers.

permission to speak to the Emperor. "The position of a prisoner," he said, "is always unhappy; but I feel assured that it will be alleviated as much as possible in the hands of a Prince so noted for humanity as your Majesty; and that I shall be granted the privileges my rank as a French General deserve." Alexander told him he was mistaken if he expected any especial favour from him, as his conduct throughout Germany, Poland, and Russia was that of a robber, a plunderer, and a murderer. Vandamme is said to have coolly replied: "It may be, Sire, that I am a robber and a plunderer, but at least I have not to reproach myself with having soiled my hands with the blood of a father." Notwithstanding this speech Alexander let him keep his sword; but Vandamme afterwards made a complaint to Constantine at not being permitted to retain his aide-de-camp, and being sent to Prague in an open carriage, which would expose him to the insults of the villagers. Constantine hearing he had already abused Alexander to the Austrians, answered, "the harshest treatment would be even generosity towards a man sullied like him with the blackest crimes," and deprived him of his sword; but the General's apprehensions were not altogether groundless, for he was hooted by the mob as he drove through Laun and Prague on his way to Poland. He grew as pale as death, and his Russian guards quickened their pace to get rid of the indignant people. Rapatel went to see him at Laun, when he violently abused Napoleon for having, as he said, abandoned, sacrificed, and betrayed him: if he had made an attempt to succour him, instead of dictating bulletins to amuse and deceive Paris, the defeat might have been turned into a glorious victory. The discomfited General was sent to Moscow, where, remembering his own conduct in Russia, and the number of wounded prisoners he had murdered in cold blood and left at the side of the roads, he was agreeably surprised on being well received by the inhabitants.*

* Napoleon most ignobly disowned the orders he had sent to Vandamme, which are, however, now proved, and tried to make out that he had got into the difficulty of his own accord. He complained to General Meerfeldt of too little respect having been shown to Vandamme as a prisoner. "I well know," he said, "that if I had two like him I should be obliged to get rid of one of them; but there is no reason why he should be treated worse than others."

The loss in the retreat from Dresden revived the ill-feeling among the Allies against the nominal commander-in-chief. The Russians urged Alexander to assume the post, and the arrival of Benningsen increased the dispute, as he could boast of having defeated Napoleon, which Schwartzenberg never had, and was indignant at the idea of submitting himself to his authority. The veteran of seventy also tried to supersede Barclay, and the Emperor had much difficulty to arrange these jealousies. Austria insisted on maintaining her two largest armies in her own dominions, one under the Archduke Ferdinand, at Presburg (it was supposed to keep a hold on Russia, now denuded of troops, and to take an opportunity of pouncing on Moldavia and Wallachia), and the other on the side of Italy, to possess herself at the earliest chance of her old influence there. The Russian generals thought that Schwartzenberg's orders for this retreat were prompted by something more than ignorance. He directed the Russian army to proceed by Pirna, blockaded by the French; while his own troops took the unmolested road by Eichwald. Had not Barclay either wilfully or by mistake disobeyed his injunctions, the Russians, including their Emperor, would have borne the whole weight of the French army, pressed in between Vandamme and the French Imperial Guard, which had moved on to Pirna the day after the battle of Dresden, and there halted when it was discovered that Alexander and his troops had taken another road. Who but Austrian emissaries could have informed Napoleon that the Russians were ordered to proceed by the Pirna road, and prepare him to await them at that point? And even if the Russians had fought their way through the two armies, would not their loss have been as severe as the renewed attack which their Emperor had desired on Dresden? The intelligence had in the end reacted against the French, and prevented them from sending timely assistance to Vandamme, though Pirna was only fifteen miles from Kulm. Jackson states that "some secret influence is believed with reason to be working in the Austrian Cabinet, and that up to September 23rd not a word appeared in the *Moniteur* on the subject of the Austrian declaration of war. The French at home were quite ignorant of it." At a conference on September 2nd, when the Sovereigns, Schwartzenberg, and some of the generals were present,

Alexander proposed to take the chief command. The Austrians, supported by Metternich and Stadion, besides the fact of the whole army being now on the soil of Austria, and a large Austrian force between the Russians and their own frontier, loudly objected to this arrangement, and Schwartzemberg in the most courteous manner intimated, that although he did not dispute Alexander's military capacity, yet his well-known defective sight and hearing was enough to prevent him from being qualified to take the post. The Emperor admitted this was a drawback, but the vigilance of his staff would counteract it; on which Schwartzemberg retorted, that as his Majesty had allowed it to be a drawback, he must be pardoned if he declined to relinquish his post to him. He was perfectly aware that if Alexander took it, more active operations would immediately follow, and his government was willing to put up with his plans being subjected to constant criticism, often disobeyed, and Alexander's adopted in their place, so long as they retained the nominal glory of being chief in the war. Even at this time they had not given up the idea of making an early peace with Napoleon, and Maria Louisa constantly wrote to her father to entreat him to listen favourably to any offer of peace. The King was very severe in his criticisms of Schwartzemberg, but Alexander afterwards effected a reconciliation between them. "No very friendly feelings," writes Stein, "prevail between Russia and Austria, made worse of course by the well-known lukewarmness of the latter Power. Over and above all this, Metternich aims at a preponderating influence, such as neither his talents, his character, nor the military position of the Austrian Empire entitles him to. Alexander sees all this very clearly, and will very probably undertake the command of his own and the Prussian army in person, and the movement of masses thus animated will then communicate itself to the inert Austrian.* . . . We have fought everywhere with distinguished success except when the Grand Army was present."

* "Alexander," he says, "was at this period thirty-five years of age; his exterior is pleasing, his features regular and noble, his carriage graceful, and the inclination of his head as he puts forward his left ear to listen when engaged in conversation is not displeasing. The principal trait in his character is good humour, friendliness, and a wish to render mankind happy and noble."

Stein had many differences with Alexander, but however much he may have feared his power during his life, he always spoke of him in the highest terms after his death.

Francis wishing to conciliate his allies, presented Alexander and the King with the small cross of the Order of Maria Theresa. As he gave it to Alexander, he said he did so hoping he would not attempt to merit the cross of commander. It was decided to the satisfaction of the Prussians and Russians that Alexander should move with the Austrians, which would enable him to act as Schwartzenberg's guide, and the Austrians were not averse to the arrangement, as it would plainly prove to France that they were moving under compulsion, not from choice.

Jomini told the allied commanders it was Napoleon's military ability and fear of the consequences which kept people faithful to him, for that he had disgusted everybody. When bread was wanted, and the troops reduced to the last stage of destitution, the only remedy he proposed was a military decoration. Pirna, already reduced to extreme misery, was now called upon to provide 6000 rations a day for the French army; and when again complaints of the starvation of his troops was brought to Napoleon, his answer was, "Cause the commissary to be shot, and then you will want for nothing." At his command the lunatics were turned out of an asylum at Pirna, and left to wander through the country without any means of subsistence, that it might be turned into a fortification; the French tore down the wooden crucifixes placed at the side of the roads by devotees of an earlier day, and converted them into firewood, while the tombs were opened by the plunderers who followed the French army, and the dead stripped of their grave clothes, to be sold in the camp in default of other spoil. The position of the Austrian prisoners taken at Dresden was truly wretched. They were locked up, crowded together, without food or attention to their wounds, till many perished of cold, starvation, and neglect.* Orders were given to lay waste the friendly country which had refused to join with the Allies, so that it should afford no food or shelter to the enemy; and as if they had not been sufficiently punished for

* A sketch of the French hospitals was published in "The Graves of the Grand Army."

such acts by their disasters in Russia, the French were zealous in carrying out this short-sighted command. The ill effects soon turned upon themselves. Want and misery produced typhus fever, and though the French losses were heavy at Dresden and Kulm, disease soon carried off far more than the bullets of the enemy.

The allied advance upon Dresden was not without result, for by making a diversion it enabled the Silesian army, composed of Russians and Prussians, to overthrow Macdonald and the French on the Bober. At the decisive victory of the Katzbach, fought August 26th, the 11th French corps was destroyed, and three eagles, 103 pieces of cannon, three generals, and 18,000 men fell into the hands of the Allies. This was followed by the news of the battle of Grosse Beeren, gained by the Prussians under Bulow, over Oudinot, who had been ordered to retake Berlin, and the Russian cavalry rendered efficient service in the battle. Ney was sent to replace Oudinot, but sustained a defeat from the Prussians on September 26th, and the Russian general Vinzingerode, at the head of 10,000 cavalry, pursued the fugitives with such effect that he captured eighty cannon and 10,000 prisoners. On these occasions Bernadotte did not render the slightest assistance, though he was actually in sight of both engagements. He afterwards to some degree admitted his inefficiency, by saying he was in a false position. "The sight of every dead body, of every wounded man, of every French prisoner awakened in his breast the most cruel feelings."* But the Allies had not only to complain of inaction; his proceedings were absolutely hostile to them, and all of a nature to favour the French. His withdrawal of the garrison from Hamburg, and refusal to assist her, followed by Davoust's vengeance, withheld Holland from declaring for the Allies, though Napoleon's policy had reduced half the population of Amsterdam to beg their bread.

In the course of September Benningsen arrived at Toplitz with the last reserves of the Russian Empire. They were as usual without tents, but encamped in huts constructed out of boughs and logs in the plain, where there was an abundance of

* *Mémoires de Charles-Jean*, ii. 100. Constantine told Wilson before Dresden that Bernadotte was not Napoleon's enemy. Also Sir C. Stewart's despatches to Sir G. Jackson.

provisions ; and of the three allied armies the Russians were now by far the best organized in every point : the Austrians were deficient in all arrangements for the comfort or maintenance of their troops, from want of money and the haste with which they were hurried into the field ; while the Prussians, like the young recruits of the French Republic, were often volunteers eager for war, but unwilling to submit to the discipline of the ordinary conscript.

It was agreed at a Chapter of the Knights of the Garter, July 27th, to offer the decoration to Alexander ; and Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt was sent to find him in Germany, and not without some difficulty made his way with the ribbon of the Order to Toplitz about the middle of September. Common sense has now decided it is better to forego the antiquated ceremonies and oaths formerly taken by every knight when it regards a foreign prince, and no one would recommend imposing an oath on an Emperor of Russia to use his utmost efforts against the Saracen for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre ; but their omission distressed one of the English diplomatists, who says that everything impressive in the customary ceremony of an investiture was discarded. The Emperor, always disliking a ceremony in which he was the centre of attraction, was in a very little room with his brother, being with difficulty persuaded to wear shoes and stockings for the purpose, and the whole ceremony consisted in the commissioners buckling on the Garter, Alexander and Constantine smiling all the time. Accustomed to the high-sounding titles of the Russian Orders, the name of the English one perhaps struck them as rather ludicrous ; and there are no mediæval ceremonies in Russia except such as are considered equally useful and applicable at the present day.*

* All the English present, and about ten others, including Benning-sen, were asked to dine at one o'clock the next day with the Emperor. "He wore the star of the Order of the Garter above his knee on account of his high boots, probably," says Wilson, "the first time that it was ever so worn." "Some of the party," writes Jackson, "could scarcely refrain from a burst of laughter, others from looking indignant at this undignified treatment and novel mode of wearing our most distinguished order. However, his Majesty was very gracious and affable." This envoy was very sensitive on the subject of the Garter, for when a short time afterwards he saw the Emperor, for only the second time in his experience, wearing shoes and stockings, without boots, but not the Garter, he says he felt so angry he could almost have strangled him with it ; but he was

While the Austrian army was recruiting, and the Prussian Guards at Toplitz preparing for another campaign, Platof and his Cossacks harassed the enemy's communications with France, and carried off ammunition and provisions. Czernichef's partisan corps made a rapid movement upon Cassel, the capital of Westphalia, which capitulated, and Jerome fled with his Guards; while within eight days of the battle of Kulm, Wittgenstein, left in charge of the outposts of Bohemia, advanced as far as Pirna, where he drove out St. Cyr with the French garrison, and halted for the night within a few miles of Dresden. Napoleon pursued him on his withdrawal to the plain of Kulm, where, carefully examining his position with his field-glass, he decided it would not be safe to advance further, and gave an order to retreat to Dresden. The next day Wittgenstein again advanced on the Pirna road, to draw Napoleon after him among the hills. He engaged his attention while Zeithen's Prussian brigade took the French right flank, and the Austrians under Meerfeldt appeared in the rear of their left. A panic ensued, and the French fled in confusion. One general, seven cannons, an eagle, and 2000 prisoners were taken, and the fog and the approach of night alone prevented as complete a dispersion of the enemy as at Kulm. The Austro-Russian report, dated from the headquarters at Toplitz, September 19th, 1813, says that "Constantine was, during the battle in the vanguard and in the midst of the greatest shower of musket-balls."

On September 22nd Napoleon again started from Dresden to engage Blucher in a general battle; but the old Prussian, in conformity with his orders, declined the combat. The French losses since the reopening of the campaign amounted, according to Cathcart, to 148,000, of which 50,000 were prisoners in the hands of the Allies, and the rest killed, disabled, sick, and deserters, who were becoming very numerous. They had lost more than 300 guns, while hardly fifty, and those chiefly left in muddy roads, were taken from the Allies. At this time orders were given for the strengthening of the Rhine frontier. "Truth, sincerity, is wanted now," wrote

obliged to own that Alexander's mode of putting it on was fairly surpassed by Lady Castlereagh, who wore her husband's ribbon round her forehead at a ball at the Congress of Vienna.

Napoleon. The Allies had not recruited their forces to the extent they had once anticipated ; but "Russia," says Cathcart, "had done her part nobly, considering that from the Niemen to the Elbe is a distance of about 800 miles. The Prussian landwehr was increased ; and as both paid for all their provisions, Bohemia was enriched rather than despoiled by their presence.

On October 8th Alexander's brother-in-law, the King of Bavaria,* was at last induced to join the Allies. His army had perished in Russia, and his States being overrun by the Russo-German partisan corps and bands of Cossacks, Alexander carried on the correspondence without the intervention of a minister, and promised to let him keep his regal title and preserve the integrity of his patrimonial States. He was one of Napoleon's most faithful adherents, and rejoiced when he heard of the battle of Dresden, thinking it must drive the Russians beyond the Niemen. His sister, the Queen of Saxony, was urgent in her appeals to him to stand by "our dear Emperor," as she called Napoleon. But he had no longer a choice ; and in his protocol, dated Munich, October 17th, he called himself "Napoleon's truest ally," but showed how an irresistible necessity compelled him to take part with his enemies. The King of Würtemberg immediately declared war against Bavaria, and reinforced his contingent with 6000 men. But Napoleon having received early information from the King of Bavaria of the step he was compelled to take, was prepared for a similar defection of all the German States, and never intrusted any important post to a German corps, or ranged them in battle unless they were flanked by French, and placed face to face with the enemy.

On September 9th the Austrian minister signed a treaty at Toplitz with Prussia and Russia, which provided that each of the three Powers should keep 150,000 men in the field, and increase the number if it became necessary, and that Austria should be reconstructed as nearly as possible as she stood in 1805, the Confederation of the Rhine dissolved, and the independence of the intermediate States between the Inn and the Rhine established.

* His letters to Alexander began : "Sire, my brother and brother-in-law."

During this month Napoleon twice attempted to make a separate peace with Francis; but the two battles of Kulm restored the good humour of the Allies; and although after Dresden Austria was prepared to reconcile herself with France, she now reconsidered the subject, and remained with Russia.

As soon as the Austrian forces were organized the Allies prepared to carry out the plan they sketched before the battle of Dresden, and concentrate their armies on Napoleon's main communications with France, though it would entail the abandonment of the line of communication with Russia. But every day this became of less consequence; for, except in the fortresses of Dantzic and Modlin, which still held out, the French influence was lost in Eastern Europe.

In obedience to orders from the commander-in-chief, the armies of the North and of Silesia effected a junction in the country between the Mulde and the Saale, and Bernadotte and Blucher had an interview, Muffling acting as interpreter—for Bernadotte could speak no German, and Blucher did not understand French. The Crown Prince fell on the neck of his "dear brother in arms," as he called him; and when Blucher entered fully into the arrangements for their march on Leipsic, he kept nodding approval. But when he began to state his own views, gradually worked round to the point of wishing to hide the united armies behind the Mulde, and not attempt any active operation, by which means he would have paralyzed Blucher's army as well as his own, Muffling represented that the French armies would be vastly superior to the Allied Grand Army, and would easily overturn it while they were standing by. He acquiesced in all this; but the next morning became greatly excited, pressing his own plan of inaction upon his colleague, till Sir Charles Stewart interfered, and said he should be obliged to refuse the order for the payment of the English subsidy unless Bernadotte fulfilled his agreement. The Prince vainly tried flattery and profuse expressions of his attachment to England; he could not deceive the Commissioner, who, on his daily repeated refusal to proceed to Leipsic, carried out his threat; and it was mainly owing to the power which this payment gave the English that he was at last induced to stir at all. Even then, when he heard of Napoleon's advance towards Leipsic, he tried to recross the

Elbe; but Bertrand had broken down his bridges and stopped his retreat. If he had taken a real part in the campaign it is generally allowed hardly a Frenchman could have escaped.

The Grand Army, consisting of nearly 150,000 men, moved early in October, and occupied the passes leading into Saxony; while Napoleon remained at Dresden to pounce on any detached corps, or in the hope that they might make some false movement. Yet the Cossacks came up to its very walls and carried off his supplies. It is a proof of their good discipline that, while Baron Odleben describes the mode in which the French soldiers pillaged the Saxons, throwing their own black ration bread into the Elbe, and robbing the poorest cottagers, he complains that the Cossacks *bought* the provisions which the peasants were bringing up to supply the French. In the fifteenth bulletin Napoleon stated his intention "to manœuvre on the right bank between Hamburg and Dresden, to threaten Potsdam and Berlin, and to make Magdeburg the centre of operations, which was supplied with provisions and warlike stores for this purpose."

On entering Saxony the Allies left Benningsen with 60,000 men to guard the passes and watch Dresden, and proceeded towards Leipsic. Napoleon left Dresden with his Guards and the royal family of Saxony on October 7th; but mistrusting the Saxon troops, he assembled them before he parted from their King, and read a speech in French (which Caulaincourt translated into German) telling them to remain true to their colours; for the Allies wished to divide Saxony, and Prussia would gain the greater part of it. He embraced the King, who went to Leipsic, and gave orders to "carry off all the cattle, burn the woods, and destroy the fruit trees" on his route, marching for a few days as if to carry out the plan stated in his bulletin, or to deceive the Allies, but finally turning towards Leipsic, where he arrived October 15th, preceded by Murat, Marmont, and Bertrand with the main body of his troops. The same day Alexander's head-quarters were moved from Altenberg to Pegau, about fourteen English miles from Leipsic.

If the whole force of the Allies in Germany is taken collectively, it now undoubtedly outnumbered Napoleon's, though not to the extent the French would gladly believe. His

disposable army is rated by the best authorities at 180,000, and the garrisons of Dresden, Torgau, Wittenberg and Magdeburg amounted to 60,000 more. But considering Bernadotte commanded 72,000 of the Allies, and assiduously kept these back, and prevented them from joining in the approaching decisive battle, and that owing to the delays he imposed on Blucher, this general had not yet reached the scene of action with his 70,000 men, while Benningsen and Colloredo in command of 60,000 were guarding Bohemia and Dresden, it is plain the Allies could not display on any particular point an army which Napoleon did not feel himself perfectly able to engage, and that it was not by mere weight of numbers they hoped to destroy their enemy. A letter intercepted from Murat to his wife said, that the Allies were at last acting as Napoleon had long wished, and were coming down into the plain; and carefully examining the ground in the neighbourhood, with which he was well acquainted, Napoleon satisfied himself that the marshy tract of country, backed by the Pleisse and Elster, which protect Leipsic on three sides, would make an appropriate site for the approaching combat.

On the night of October 15th Schwartzenberg put forth a general order as a prelude to the battle which he could not now escape; but "it contained no instructions," says Cathcart, "and was an exhortation only." The order for the attack on the French army, October 16th, "was a concession made by Schwartzenberg to the representations of Alexander and the King, for he certainly did not appear to anticipate success; nor at the commencement was he eager for its prosecution."* He reserved to himself the duty of acting with his Austrians, whom he kept securely posted out of reach, leaving the active part of the battle to devolve entirely on the Russians and Prussians under the immediate command of Alexander. But from the first the Czar disapproved of the position of the Austrians, and sent messages more than once during the battle, that at least a portion of them might be brought across the river Pleisse, which cut them off entirely from the field. The Elster also divided the centre of the Austrian army, and Schwartzenberg wished to post the flower of the Russian Guards

* Jomini says Alexander asserted his own military opinions more loudly in the councils.

in the narrow marshy space between the Elster and the Pleisse, intersected with brooks, and it was only Alexander's firm resistance to such a fatal measure that brought them to the decisive point in the centre, to the east of both these rivers. During the night of October 15th a rocket proclaimed that Blucher was arriving to the north of the town, the position throughout marked out for him by the Allies, but his colleague still loitered behind, and no one knew exactly where he was.

In the battle of Leipsic, as well as in all the combats between Napoleon and the Allies, the advantage they derived from the superior discipline of their troops was marred by the effect of being composed of three different nations, all jealous of each other, and the commanders and Sovereigns all having separate interests. Jomini said he had never seen unveiled before so many rivalries as appeared in their councils, and Alexander found that as much vigilance was required in guarding against the wilful errors of the Austrians and Swedes as in counteracting the designs of the enemy. Napoleon, on the contrary, held an undisputed command, and he declared in a hopeful moment that this advantage alone was worth 100,000 men.

Leipsic was placed in the highest possible state of defence, and Marmont's division, consisting of 30,000 men, and supported by Ney with the 3rd and 4th corps, was strongly posted to oppose Blucher, who had fifteen miles to march on the morning of the attack; the divisions led by Poniatowski, Kellerman, Augereau, Victor, Latour-Maubourg, Lauriston, Macdonald, and Bertrand, and commanded by Napoleon in person, being spread over several villages and orchards, between four and five miles to the south-east of Leipsic, every ridge and ditch was made defensible, but so fast being surrounded by the enemy, that in case of a total defeat all passage for retreat might have been cut off. This was Alexander's intention, and would have been accomplished if Bernadotte had faithfully fulfilled his part.

On the 14th Wittgenstein and Kleist engaged Murat, who fell back on Leipsic, and they penetrated as far as the villages of Wachau and Liebertwolkwitz, the objects of attack on the 16th. About six A.M. the troops assembled, and two hours

later the attack began, the French army being already under arms. The left wing of the Allies was composed of Russians and Prussians, and commanded by Kleist, who carried the village of Mark Kleberg, on the Pleisse, at the point of the bayonet. Next to him, the centre, composed of Russians under the Emperor's cousin Eugene, marched on the village of Wachau, and partially obtained possession of it and of an adjoining wood. Prince Gortchakof with the right wing had further to march, to attack Liebertwolkwitz, behind which Napoleon was posted on an eminence. Klenau with a small Austrian detachment made a simultaneous attack on the right extremity of the Allies, and was received with a tremendous fire of 200 cannon, besides a perfect storm of musketry from the shelter of the fences and garden walls. The Russian and Prussian Guards commanded by Miloradovitz, and the heavy cavalry led by Constantine, formed the reserve. Alexander was stationed behind the village of Gossa, in advance of Eugene and Gortchakof's original posts.

As soon as Napoleon saw these movements, he directed his attention to Klenau's repulse, and when the Austrians wavered brought up a preponderating force to separate him effectually from the Allies; for Gortchakof was too weak and too far distant to give any support. Alexander sent off at once to inform Schwartzberg of Klenau's danger and the want of support on the right wing, and at length the commander-in-chief let a division under Bianchi proceed to their assistance. But it did not arrive until Klenau's men were scattered into a wood on their right, where the French could not dislodge them. A body of cuirassiers under General Nostitz, detached from Schwartzberg's army at the same time, came up earlier and assisted Eugene, who was hard pressed; while Gortchakof had gone so much further towards Liebertwolkwitz and the strongest points of the French position than the divisions flanking him, that his corps was completely isolated, and the right of the allied centre, including the village of Gossa, almost denuded of troops. Alexander saw this defect, and sent for the reserve, including the Prussian and Russian Guards, and Constantine's cavalry. But the ground they had to cross was broken marshes, intercepted by a swollen water-course, and in the passage the cavalry and infantry became

entangled, and the moment for action was lost ; as Murat had also seen the unprotected space, and assembling Latour-Maubourg's cavalry corps on the top of the hill of Liebert-wolkwitz, he took the command of 5000 splendid horsemen, and rode with them down into the plain, where only two regiments of the Russian Guard had at present appeared. A brook ran from Gossa to the Pleisse, and as the banks were swampy, it could only be passed by a rather wide leap, or a narrow passage over a causeway made by the farmers for their cattle. Such was the obstacle, apparently insignificant, but practically formidable, which delayed the passage of the Russian heavy cavalry, and its commander's impatience to push forward hindered the infantry, who could have passed along the causeway in single file with greater ease. Constantine was therefore too late to repeat his famous charge at Kulm, for only two regiments of Miloradovitz's light cavalry had passed the stream when Murat charged down upon them, driving them back across the causeway or to the right. He was checked unexpectedly by the brook, and the two Russian regiments formed again, when they were suddenly reinforced by a single regiment of hussars, which Wittgenstein, who was posted to observe the road to Dresden, detached to join them. This caused a panic, and the French horsemen turned. The Russian light cavalry immediately followed them, and at this moment Alexander, who had watched the affair with intense anxiety from a neighbouring hillock, sent off his own escort of Cossacks of the Guard under Orlof Denisof, and they took the retiring mass in flank.* The French retreat from this moment became a disorderly flight, and the fugitives did not draw their bridles till they had gained the protection of the infantry. Latour-Maubourg was disabled by the loss of his leg, six guns were captured by the Cossacks, and Murat owed his life to the anxiety of a young Russian who recognized him to take him prisoner. This youth called upon him by name to surrender. He would not kill the King, though he could have done so with ease, but clung to him as Murat galloped on and endeavoured to escape. At last several of Murat's escort released him, and ran their swords through the Russian, who fell perfectly riddled with wounds. Even

* Cathcart.

the French considered his forbearance in not slaying their leader deserved some mercy, so far as being satisfied with his capture, and perhaps it would have been as well for Murat if he had met his death that day on the field of battle.

Napoleon watched this cavalry struggle with no less interest than Alexander, and seeing the insignificant force with which his horsemen had to deal, made quite sure of the victory. He observed with a smile to a staff officer that "Fortune is going to favour us again," and sent off a message to the King of Saxony that the battle was won. When 5000 cavaliers, whom he boasted were the finest in the world, were put to flight by a force of less than 2000 light horse, the spectacle so unusual to him of fugitives rushing helter-skelter to the foot of the hill on which he stood alarmed him seriously for his personal safety, and he sent for reinforcements from Ney, who was assisting Marmont to repel Blucher's attack. Many attribute Blucher's success to this untimely diversion of a part of the opposing force, for he obliged the French to retire at night behind the river Partha into Leipsic, leaving 2000 prisoners and forty-three pieces of artillery in his hands. Ney was also unable to turn the fortunes of the battle of Wachau, as the combat on the south side of Leipsic has been called, for after their cavalry attack was foiled, the light infantry division of the Guards, under Yermolof, advanced to Gossa, and resisted a powerful infantry attack. Night put an end to the contest, leaving the two armies in much the same position as the day before, except that Kleist's corps was considerably in advance, and held the village of Mark Kleberg. The French of course claimed it as a victory, but Cathcart says the engagement was in fact a drawn battle. An unfortunate incident occurred to the Austrian reserve, for in the course of the day Count Meerfeldt was detached from it to assist Kleist when hard pressed at Mark Kleberg, and attempted to cross the Pleisse over an unguarded bridge, actually between the corps of Poniatowski and the French reserve. He was taken prisoner, but his battalion succeeded in making its escape. Meerfeldt had been employed by Francis as a negotiator for an armistice in the days of Austria's calamities, and the night after the battle of Austerlitz wrote a pencil note to Napoleon, stating his master's wish to make peace. Napoleon sent for him now

to go to Francis and Alexander to offer, on condition of an armistice being at once concluded, that the French should quit Germany and retire behind the Rhine till a general peace could be arranged. "Our political alliance," he said, "is broken up, but between your master and me there is another indissoluble bond. I invoke that, for I shall always confide in the regard of my father-in-law. I shall never cease to appeal to him. You see how I defend myself. Does your Cabinet never weigh the consequences of such exasperation? If it is wise it will speedily do so, for who can foretell the events of to-morrow? They deceive themselves as to my disposition. I only ask to rest in the shadow of peace. . . . You think only of repairing by a single stroke the calamities of twenty years, and you never perceive the changes time has made, and that now for Austria to gain at the expense of France is to lose. Reflect on it; it is neither France nor Austria nor Prussia singly that can arrest on the Vistula the inundation of a people half nomad, essentially conquering, and whose dominions extend from this to China."* He also said he had 200,000 men with him, and a far more considerable cavalry than the Allies expected. "In the spring I shall only have to do with Austria. It is against her alone I have to prepare war. Russia will not have an army, and Prussia will be equally destitute. When you speak of an armistice to the two Emperors, the sound of your voice will be eloquent indeed in recollections."

Alexander passed the night at the ruined castle of Rotha, and repaired to Schwartzenberg's head-quarters at the very moment Meerfeldt appeared, who gave the message to him, and soon afterwards to Lord Cathcart. The last advised a council to consider about it, but the armistice was rejected, and Schwartzenberg sent for answer that he could arrange nothing in the absence of his Emperor. At the same council it was agreed that no further military operations should be undertaken till the next day, in the hope of Benning's and Colloredo's arrival, and also of receiving some news of Bernadotte.

Alexander thought he had reason to complain of Yermolof, who commanded the Russian infantry reserve at Wachau, for

* Fain, ii. 412-413.

having allowed his men to be entangled with the cavalry before they reached the brook in the rear of Gossa, and delayed their advance at a most important moment. Latour-Maubourg afterwards boasted he had almost taken the Emperor prisoner. They had come into action later in the day, and behaved very gallantly ; but when they had failed to appear the whole army was in jeopardy, and only saved by Russian light cavalry and the Cossacks. That evening the Czar sent an order to him to give up his command, and repair to one of the regiments thirty miles off before Dresden. Yermolof was a bold, well-informed, and fiery officer, afterwards known to the Circassians as the Russian devil, from the energy with which he pursued them to their highland retreats. He was almost furious when he received his master's command, but nevertheless obeyed it so far as to ride with all speed to his new post, and, after hastily reviewing the regiment, came back again in time to head his old troops the next day. Alexander passed a sleepless night, as he usually did at an important crisis, and it was stormy weather and not favourable to sleep. He was on horseback before daybreak, and proceeded towards Gossa, where he was joined by the King, and briefly inspected his army, when he saw Yermolof at the head of his regiment. He turned pale with anger, and sent to inquire why he had left his new station and dared to disobey his orders. The general replied energetically to the messenger, "Go back and tell his Imperial Majesty that the present time is highly important, and I feel anxious for the fate of Russia ; tell him henceforward I serve not Alexander but my country, and am here, where I ought to be, at the head of my troops, ready to sacrifice my life in her cause." The Emperor did not say a word when this answer was brought by his aide-de-camp. He changed colour several times, but allowed the general to remain. Five months later, at the battle of Montmartre, Yermolof occupied a dangerous post, which Alexander's enemies said was purposely assigned him ; but as the Emperor would always gladly take the most hazardous position himself in an engagement, it may charitably be inferred that he placed the general where he knew so brave an officer would prefer to be posted, or wished to give him an opportunity of retrieving his error at Wachau. Yermolof was much dis-

tinguished, and directly the engagement was ended Alexander called him forward on the field and gave him the cross of St. George before all the troops.

Napoleon did not return into the city on the night of the 16th, but slept in his tent about two miles distant, though he ordered the bells in Leipsic to be rung as if for a victory. The 17th passed away quietly except some slight skirmishing, but his army on the north side of the town was reinforced by Regnier's division, and in the course of the afternoon Colloredo arrived with the corps expected by the Allies. In the middle of the night a watchfire proclaimed that Benningsen had made his way to within four and a half miles of the advanced outposts, and on hearing this Napoleon left his tent at two A.M. of the 18th, and drove to Ney's quarters, awakening him out of his sleep, and conferring with him for about an hour. He then passed by the suburbs round Leipsic to see Bertrand, and gave him orders to march to Weissenfels and secure the passage of the Saale for a retreat. He returned to the place where his tent was pitched, near an old windmill on a mound, and close to the bivouac of his Guards, who were posted here by their master's side during the rest of that noted day.

The advanced Russian cavalry of the allied northern army appeared in sight early on the 18th, and the Sovereigns made the plan for the second attack on Leipsic, trusting that Bernadotte could not now withdraw, but would fulfil his part and close in upon the French army from the east. But this hope was not fulfilled. Napoleon concentrated his forces, bringing them from Wachau and Liebertwolkwitz, and forming an irregular half-circle round the town; and the Allies were divided into three columns of attack: the first led by Benningsen, expecting to be joined by the Army of the North; the second, including Wittgenstein, Kleist, and the Russian reserves, by Barclay; the third, chiefly Austrian, by the Prince of Hesse-Homburg, the whole force amounting to about 104,000 men. Napoleon's army must have consisted of at least 132,000, for 52,000 were taken prisoners, and he escaped with 80,000, besides Bertrand's corps of 10,000 or 15,000 at Weissenfels, and this does not include the killed and wounded, who were very numerous. Cathcart says the Allies actually

engaged could not have exceeded by more than 8000 the part of Napoleon's force actually engaged, and the strength of the French position more than equalized this superiority. A portion of Benningsen's corps was also held back to keep open communication with the east, owing to the non-appearance of the Army of the North. Alexander and the King, "who advanced with the central column, took their station about noon on a hillock in front of it, with a panoramic view of the whole plain."* and towards evening Francis joined them from Bohemia.

The evening of the 18th closed without any decisive advantage on either side, except that Blucher had crossed the Partha and gained a footing in the suburbs of Leipsic. Several villages were taken and retaken, and 4000 young Saxon recruits, all raised by conscription since the war began, deserted with a shout from the French ranks to the Austrians, who were almost their fellow-countrymen. It was not unexpected by their generals, and had no great influence on the battle; but they expressed the utmost hatred of the French, and a desire to be led against them, a hatred which was not surprising since the French treatment of Saxony, where 20,000 marauders still pillaged the inhabitants. In this as in many other instances the system by which Napoleon gained his victories was reacting on himself to contribute to his fall.

The baggage of the allied head-quarters, including Alexander's, was left at Borna, about twenty miles from Leipsic, to avoid encumbering the army; and the King of Prussia slept there each night till the 18th, when he repaired to Alexander's head-quarters at Rotha, nearer to the battlefield, where the Czar and his staff were satisfied with such coarse provisions as their orderlies could procure for them. The staff, including Lord Cathcart, and on this occasion the King, all slept in their clothes, wrapped up in cloaks, on the bare floor of the ruined castle; but Alexander's careful aide-de-camp, Volkonski, fearing lest his master's health should suffer from the continued wet weather, for the rain penetrated every part of the building, had brought up his light camp bed from the rear. The Emperor of Austria repaired to Gossa, the head-quarters of Schwartzenberg. The cannonade and skirmishing

* Cathcart.

throughout the 18th was only checked by the darkness, and when Alexander left the ground, after the last shot was fired, thirteen villages or large farms were blazing where the troops had been engaged.* It was clear the enemy must be overthrown the next day ; and the Austrians, who formed the left wing of the allied army, were appointed to cross the Elster and join General Giulay in the country about Lutzen, to cut off the French retreat ; but the indolent Schwartzenberg neglected to give the order, or it was delayed, so that the Swedes and Austrians combined to facilitate Napoleon's escape.

Napoleon was indefatigable throughout the day on each side of the town in superintending the defence ; but at six A.M., when it was already dark, returned to his station near the windmill, where a bivouac fire was lighted, and gave orders to Berthier for a retreat through the city during the night. While the arrangements were made he threw himself on a trestle bed and slept for two hours ; after which he went to Leipsic, and took up his quarters at the Hôtel de Prusse, in the suburbs. He remained there all night, while columns of his troops passed it in full retreat, and, favoured by the unusual darkness, evacuated their positions on the field. Alexander and Frederick were both exhausted by fatigue, and later than usual, though nearly as soon as it was daylight, on the morning of the 19th, after riding ten miles round the position of their troops, they reached Probstheida at nine A.M., and ascertained the actual retreat of the French army, masked by false bivouac fires and a very slight line of picquets. The advanced corps of the Allies was already in pursuit, and the main columns marching forward as pre-arranged to make the final assault on the city.

Napoleon rode to the palace when the attack began, to take leave of the King of Saxony, and give him the option of retreating or throwing himself on Alexander's mercy. He preferred the last, so Napoleon left a Saxon battalion to guard him, for the conduct of his own troops on such occasions made him well aware of the imminent danger to which even civilians are exposed when a town is carried after a prolonged assault. His last words to the Queen were, "Madame, the King of Bavaria,

* In the previous five days the French had used 220,000 cannon balls.

your brother, is a great scoundrel." He had some difficulty in making his way through the crowd of men and confusion of guns and baggage which filled up the gates of the city, and a credible witness* affirms he was in a violent perspiration, and looked extremely agitated. Surrounded by a strong guard he contrived to effect his escape through a garden and narrow lane which was pointed out to him by a citizen, and, after crossing the Elster, ordered the bridge to be mined, ready to be blown up as soon as the rearguard had passed.

By this time part of the Russian vanguard under Sacken had arrived on an island in the suburbs, only separated from the line of retreat by a narrow branch of the river; and the artillerymen left in charge of the bridge are said to have been alarmed by them and to have carried out their orders prematurely, though others assert they only followed out most precise commands, and, as at Beresina, a part of the army was sacrificed to secure Napoleon's escape. Whichever it was, they blew up the bridge, leaving 30,000 men and 100 guns, including all the artillery of the Young Guard, with some hundreds of waggons, besides the rearguard with sixty pieces of cannon still fighting in the city.

A French writer, fond of historical romance, says that when the soldiers were ordered to quit the village of Probstheida on the night of the 18th they positively refused to do so till they had buried their dead; but, on the contrary, when Alexander and Frederick rode up to it in the morning it exhibited the most ghastly spectacle, the streets and lanes crowded with dead and dying; and that the French wounded received any succour was entirely due to the Allies, for the manner in which they were deserted by the French medical staff on an alarm was a matter of astonishment to their enemies. Leipsic itself was only less horrible than Vilna, from the sufferers not being yet increased by the victims of cold and hunger. The ill-fated Moreau once lamented that Napoleon had "entirely overthrown the art of war. Battles are now no longer anything but butcheries; it is not as formerly, by sparing the blood of the soldiers, that a campaign is ended, but by making that blood flow in torrents. Napoleon has gained his victories solely by mortal dint of men."

* Hassel. Leipsic During the Days of Terror in October, 1813.



Alexander took up his station on horseback at the windmill hill, Napoleon's post the day before. He frequently moved from it to superintend more nearly the steady progress of the attacking columns. The whole front to be defended from the Partha to the Pleisse was only two English miles in length, and, as usual, the Russians and Prussians bore the chief part. Bernadotte, stimulated by Sir Charles Stewart's threats, allowed the Russians and Prussians in the Army of the North to assist in this last attack, and when he knew Napoleon was safe away, and that the city was virtually captured, he appeared with all his force in an imposing array before the gates, and entered it with the rest; the uniforms of his Swedes unstained and their bayonets still bright as if on parade. About 11 A.M., when the town was attacked on all sides, Alexander being on horseback near the windmill watching the progress of the troops, a flag of truce was brought to him with a message from the King of Saxony, proposing to capitulate. He was not inclined to give the enemy so favourable an opportunity to complete their escape as a suspension of the attack for the purpose of negotiating would have afforded them, and replied with a distinct delivery, and in very good German (as the Germans said who were present), "A victorious army in pursuit of a flying enemy was not to be arrested in its progress by any consideration for the preservation of the town. If the gates were immediately opened the most strict discipline would be observed, but, if not, he must continue his fire upon the town." He added, "As for your King, tell him he has broken his solemn engagement with me within these few months. I can therefore no longer respect or place confidence in him; but for every German who will join his countrymen in the liberation of Germany he shall be received as a brother."*

A Russian aide-de-camp was sent back with the flag of truce to deliver correctly this answer to the King, and while he was still with him, the Prussians gained possession of the end of the street, and skirmished with the royal guard. The aide-de-camp ordered the guard to lay down their arms, and took measures for the King's safety. The Russian Guards and reserve had already advanced by the Emperor's orders,

* Cathcart.

and the Sovereigns with the staff were left almost alone. They rode down the hill and entered the town about noon, to prevent excesses, making their way through streets crowded with dejected and disarmed prisoners, the wounded, and the inhabitants, who came out shouting "Vivat Alexander! vivat der König von Preussen!" As they passed the palace and its guard with arms reversed, the King and his Court stood on the steps, but the Emperor rode on to the gate of Mark Ranstedt, where, finding the retreat of the French effectually cut off, he returned and sat on horseback in the centre of the market-place, whence he sent a portion of his guard for the protection of the royal prisoners, and to take charge of the several State departments. Under his immediate superintendence all arms and military stores were secured, order was re-established, and plunder or excess of any kind prevented.* The "victorious troops of various nations who had entered the town first, and who from their natural excitement might have been less manageable, were ordered by virtue of the supreme authority, which on that occasion he did not hesitate to assume, to withdraw, and a regular Russian garrison and commandant were immediately appointed in their place."† The allied generals had allowed no shells to be thrown into the city, but the enemy's rearguard across the river kept up a desultory fire on the town containing 52,000 of their own people. As it was not answered they soon stopped. Four generals of division were left in Leipsic. One of these, Macdonald, swam his horse through the river and escaped; another, Prince Poniatowski, who was wounded, perished in a similar attempt, and Regnier and Lauriston were brought into the market-place while Alexander still stood there to see that his orders were carried out. "He was courteous to all his prisoners," says Cathcart, "and was particularly gracious to Lauriston," who had filled the post of ambassador to his Court. Those who love to command on minor occasions are often in a great

* "The promptitude, good order, and complete success with which these arrangements were made and carried into effect exceed, perhaps, any triumph of discipline recorded in history when towns have been taken by assault, and do equal credit to the heads and the hearts of the Sovereigns and the commanders of armies by whom an event which must always be most critical and perilous was accomplished and brought to so happy an issue."—Cathcart's War of 1812-13.

† Ibid.

crisis glad to obey; and Schwartzenberg and his colleagues had yielded to Alexander and received orders from him during the late battles, and now, with the instinct of submission to superiority, the Emperor's directions were all unhesitatingly put into effect. Sad experience had taught him the want of discipline prevailing in the continental armies, for every European nation except Sweden and England had left their mark deeply engraved on the ravaged towns in Russia; and without attending to any remonstrances, he stayed the work of plunder by causing the Austrians, Prussians, Germans, and Swedes to be all marched into the suburbs, and placed his own Russians in every post throughout the city. He is blamed by Napoleonic writers for not staying to speak to the King of Saxony on his road to the market-place; but even if he had recognized him, which he probably did not till he had hurried past, he was doing him a far greater service by pushing on to prevent plunder and disorder among the victorious troops. On the other hand, Wilson writes that the Emperor felt for the King's situation, and commended attention to him; and the Prussian generals complained that Alexander was *too* civil to him, and wasted moments in reassuring the frightened monarch which might have been put to more profit in an active pursuit. But the Grand Army had suffered too much from cold, constant rain, and fatigue to be capable of continuing the pursuit without severe loss to their own overtaxed men. There were also the wounded to be cared for, and the prisoners secured. The Silesian army, whose work had been less, followed the fugitives, and for several days Blucher occupied the rooms in the afternoon which Napoleon had left in the morning. For a distance of fifty miles the road from Leipsic was strewn with dead and wounded, and Czernichef and his Cossacks marched forty miles a day in pursuit. 4000 Russian prisoners were recovered, and several thousand Austrians who had been taken at Dresden, and *starved* till they consented to serve their enemies.

Poniatowski was more than fifty years old, short and stout, with expressionless Tartar features, and pitiless in war. His corps had dwindled down to about 2000 men before the battle of Leipsic from the 15,000 with which he began the campaign. His body was rescued from the river, and interred, by Alexander's

orders, with military honours. The prisoners captured during the last five days numbered 52,000, of whom 30,000 were unwounded, besides 250 guns, 900 ammunition and other waggons, and valuable military stores and magazines.* Yet 80,000 had made their escape, and, with Bertrand's corps, Napoleon could still boast of a very formidable force when he halted at Mark Ranstedt on the evening of the 19th. But they were disorganized and panic-stricken: no Russian army had ever received such a crushing defeat from the French; and though the loss of the Allies was heavy (22,000 Russians, 15,000 Prussians, 8000 Austrians, and 300 of the Army of the North being placed hors de combat in the various battles round Leipsic), that of the French was still greater, as, besides the wounded and prisoners, between 20,000 and 30,000 are believed to have been slain. Among the peaceable inhabitants there is not an instance recorded of an injury sustained in the assault. Before it began Alexander and Frederick both addressed their troops, commending the city to their care, and desiring them to use their arms only against resisting foes. Although many of the Austrians were not engaged at all, Schwartzberg gave no order whatever for a pursuit, and the allied Sovereigns and generals, except Alexander, considered it was time to accept Napoleon's offer of peace.

Alexander remained two hours on the market-place of Leipsic, where he was joined by Bernadotte, Schwartzberg, Blucher, Benningsen, and other generals. He then went to a house in the town, and the King of Prussia to another in the suburbs. Francis did not arrive in the city till an hour or two later, by which time the group in the market-place had dispersed.† Later on in the afternoon, at Bernadotte's request, the Czar reviewed the Swedish corps, and inspected an English rocket brigade attached to the Army of the North.

It has been stated, incorrectly, that the Baden troops deserted to the Allies during the battle. The small remnant straggled with the fugitives from Leipsic over the plains of Lutzen, where, fighting with each other for provisions, some

* Cathcart's account shows that from the nature of the position a general pursuit was impossible till the bridges had been repaired.

† The French writer Phillipart has tried to embellish the scene by bringing Francis there, and also on the windmill hill during the battle.

of the French soldiers attracted Napoleon's attention, who shouted out to them that "they were all scoundrels going to the devil;" and then, pressed by want, the Germans, and even some of the Poles, began to desert, with the forlorn hope of finding their way home. The retreating army destroyed the bridges, and the Austrian Giulay did not, as was intended, oppose their passage over the Saale; so the heterogeneous mass rolled on in wild disorder, but undisturbed by the enemy till it reached the protection of the fortress of Erfurt. Galitzin was sent with the King of Saxony to Berlin, and treated him so well as to call forth an official complaint from the Prussians. Alexander placed Prince Repnine at the head of a provisional government for Saxony, and gave Schwartzenberg the cross of St. George of the first class, which was such an honourable distinction that the Emperor would not even wear it himself. "If Bernadotte," writes Sir Charles Stewart, "had done his duty, the whole of the French army engaged against Blucher would have been destroyed." "The Crown Prince's conduct is more and more dubious," writes Jackson. "It is thought to be as well to keep a vigilant eye on his movements." In the midst of the battle of Leipsic Lord Cathcart received orders from England to form an offensive and defensive treaty with the Allies; Alexander had not leisure to attend to it at that moment, and he would not negotiate with the other Powers till he had obtained the Emperor's signature; but this was afterwards arranged at Weimar. Jomini complains that Lord Cathcart meddled much in military matters, and was opposed to the armies entering France.

The Czar paid a visit to the Queen of Saxony a few days after the capture of Leipsic. She wept much in receiving him, but he left her more tranquil. Her husband could derive no comfort from the reflection that he had been a constant ally, and merely unfortunate from a steady adherence to his principles. He had urged on the first war against the young republic of France in 1792, and the Sovereigns banded for the support of monarchy held their first meeting in his States. He was Prussia's unfaithful ally before Jena, and aided in despoiling her during the last part of that campaign. When he thought the Allies likely to triumph in 1813 he had held out hopes of joining them, and withdrew when they encountered

reverses, after being led too far by those very hopes. He had adhered to Napoleon, believing him to be invincible, and had no alternative but to remain with him when he saw the fallacy of that belief. All was over now ; his kingdom was wrested from him, and belonged to them by the same right that he himself had held a portion of Prussia—the right of force. He could not complain of harsh treatment, since he had sided with the conqueror who had told the King of Prussia at Tilsit, “ You forget that you are no longer in a position to treat with us ; you must take what we in our mercy choose to give you.” The system he had long upheld was now applied to himself.

During Alexander’s march to Leipsic and afterwards to Paris, he let no invention or improvement escape him that might be useful to his own empire. Every artist, workman, or mechanic who appeared likely to answer his purpose was engaged to go to Russia, and he kept several officers employed in seeking out such as were worth taking into his service. “ The march of the Russian army through Germany and on to Paris,” he said at an audience in 1813, “ will be profitable to all Russia. There is a new epoch in history about to commence for us also.” “ The needy manufacturers,” writes Wilson, “ in the country through which we pass, trusting that the ports will be opened by our arms, and their losses repaired, shriek through their famished throats vivas to the Emperor, who salutes even the workhouse paupers with the courtesy of a Bolingbroke.” The same author relates that on the 20th of October, the Emperor at a council mistaking what he had said, answered him somewhat sharply. The next morning he sent for him into his room and made him a handsome apology. “ I know very few men in the world,” says Wilson, “ who would have taken such pains, and so liberally acknowledged his error.”

The Russian colonel, Chrapowitzki, entered Gotha, capturing the French minister St. Aignan and his little army ; and on October 24th the three divisions of the Grand Army were all within reach of concentration, and prepared for another battle if required in the neighbourhood of Erfurt ; but Napoleon declined it, though he had announced in the 17th bulletin that he was victorious at Leipsic. Alexander left Leipsic and halted at Jena on the 23rd, crossing her battlefield on his

route. On the 24th he took up his quarters at Weimar, and his sister, after an absence of a twelvemonth, was able to return.

Bernadotte requested Alexander to accept the highest order of the Sword directly after Leipsic, but he contrived to withdraw his forces from the scene of action, so as not to be involved in the pursuit, and openly talked of his own friendship for Jerome and the Swedish sympathy with France. Only a fortnight before Paris capitulated, he told the Marquis de Chabannes that "he could not enter France only in command of Swedes, as with Swedes alone he was in constant danger." "If the Swedes," he added, "suspected he was attached to the Bourbons, they would assassinate him."* He complained much of not having been given a sufficiently high command. He felt he was not placed in so prominent a position as to enable him to make the impression on the French which was necessary before he could hope to ascend their throne. He continued to release all French prisoners wherever he found them on his road; but even his vanity could not blind him to the fact that he only took a fourth place in the alliance, and would always be overshadowed by the two Emperors and the King. He therefore sulkily turned towards the north to recompense himself by the Danish territory in Germany and with Oldenburg; and on his own authority harassed and threatened the unhappy Danes, whom Napoleon had already drained of money and men, till he compelled them to sign the peace of Lubeck, transferring Norway to Sweden.

Benningsen, with a Russian detachment, marched to blockade Hamburg; and the French garrisons were expelled from Hanover, which was restored to the King of England. On December 18th the Duke of Cambridge arrived there to take possession of the Government. Immediately after Leipsic Schwartzberg sent Klenau's corps to reinforce Osterman, left before Dresden, and the city capitulated to the Austrian commander, who permitted the garrison, reduced to great straits, to march out in full force, though unarmed, to France without being considered prisoners. As soon as the Sovereigns heard of it they declared they could not ratify such extraordinary terms; so St. Cyr, who had reached Altenberg, was offered to

* Despatches and Correspondence of the Duke of Wellington.

return to Dresden, where everything should be placed just as it was before the capitulation, or else surrender at discretion. He had left 6000 sick in the city to be cared for by the Allies; and knew he should cause a mutiny if he took his soldiers back to the scene of misery and infection. He therefore surrendered; and, including the sick, 33,744 soldiers, 1759 officers, besides 240 pieces of cannon fell into the hands of the Allies.

Napoleon continued his retreat across the Rhine, leaving 150,000 soldiers in the German and Polish fortresses, without any orders whatever, and his rearguard was almost cut to pieces while protecting his march.* He arrived at St. Cloud November 9th, and was soon involved in stormy debates with his ministers and the Chamber of Deputies. He told them he had brought 100,000 men to the Rhine, and if this was anything approaching the real number after all his losses, he must have possessed a far larger army in Germany than was generally believed; but 1,100,000 recruits had been drawn from France alone since 1811, and they naturally hesitated when he demanded a fresh levy of 300,000 men. They advised him to accept the terms of peace now offered by the Allies from Frankfort; and in his answer he made the mistake of treating it as a personal matter. "They desired inglorious ease for themselves," he said, "at the expense of his honour;" and quoting Louis XIV., declared he was the State. "Even if I have done wrong," he said, "you should not reproach me publicly; people wash their dirty linen at home. France has more need of me than I of France. You shall have peace in three months, or I will perish. I go to seek

* "The state of the French army in Dresden and East Saxony at that time is described by eye-witnesses as only being equalled when it retreated from Moscow. The famishing soldiers cut flesh off the limbs of the wounded soldiers lying by the wayside. Three hundred of the civil inhabitants were carried off weekly by typhus, and 200 daily brought from the military hospitals for interment. The gravediggers at last ceased to bury them, and they lay in ghastly rows over the cemeteries; while the French infirmiers were so hardened to the sufferings of the wounded that they piled many in the agonies of death on the top of the carts which conveyed away the dead, supposing the end would have arrived by the time they reached the grave. A spectator was horror-struck by hearing shrieks proceed from a cartload of corpses when the drivers trampled them down to make room for more, and several were seen struggling in the Elbe, revived by the cold water, when thrown into the river with the idea that they were past all hope."—Quoted by Alison.

the enemy, and I shall overthrow him. If you would believe me, I would yield to the enemy more than he demands of me." However, he also declared that he would not make peace till Munich had been burned, to revenge himself on Bavaria, and ended by dissolving the Assembly. Symptoms of disaffection were displayed in Paris, and the mode in which he praised his own "strength of mind," his "ardent temperament," and "indomitable character" in his public addresses, no longer impressed the people, who saw that these qualities, when exercised only for his own profit, were fast bringing France to ruin. Verses were affixed in the night to the column on the Place Vendôme to the effect that, if the square was filled with the blood he had shed, his statue on the top could drink it without being lowered, and revolutionary songs were sung about the streets. The people left a village church unanimously as soon as the priest began to read the prayers for the Emperor. Where, they might well ask, was the flower of their country, whose mangled yet living remains were left unheeded in Germany, to be cared for by those whom he designated as cannibals and barbarians, or to find their way, pale and ragged, without pensions or reward, to France? Even the fate of the officers was often unknown to their friends. Yet the new levy was being enforced with relentless energy. At this crisis, hoping to obtain the support of pious Roman Catholics, Napoleon allowed the Pope to leave Fontainebleau and return to Rome. He also liberated Ferdinand of Spain, on condition that he would expel the English, and re-establish an alliance between Spain and France. "The English," said this ex-republican, "were spreading Jacobin principles in Spain, and attacking the foundations of the throne, the aristocracy, and the Church." Ferdinand dared not sign a treaty without consulting the Cortes, and they disdained to accept the alliance. In the end he was released unconditionally, and received with the greatest enthusiasm in Madrid.

When it was known that Napoleon had crossed the Rhine, and left the German States adhering to him without defence, Würtemberg and Baden submitted to Alexander, and their princes, his uncle and brother-in-law, arrived on November

24th to meet him at Frankfort. The efforts Würtemberg had made for France after the Russian retreat were praised by Napoleon in a letter to the Empress, and during the course of 1813, the King had decreed that criminals hostile to the French rule should be denied the use of advocates at their trials. Napoleon, in the St. Helena memoirs, calls him the only clever sovereign in Europe except Alexander, and says he was fitted to rule a larger kingdom, but that he was "unprincipled and wicked."* As the armies of these princes were already exhausted in the French service, their adhesion added no real strength to the Allies.

The garrison of Dantzic under Rapp surrendered to Prince Alexander of Würtemberg, in command of a Russian force, December 2nd, after a long defence; Stettin on the Oder, with a garrison of 7600 men, on November 21st; Torgau on the Elbe, on December 26th—giving 10,000 more prisoners to the Allies. The town of Erfurt capitulated a week earlier, but the garrison retired into the strong fortress of St. Petersburg connected with it, and Wittgenstein and Kleist, leaving a blockading force, joined the advancing army. Davoust employed Benningsen in a weary blockade of Hamburg till after the accession of Louis XVIII., while Magdeburg also remained in a state of siege. Wittenberg surrendered in the early part of 1814.

The French defeats in Germany at last raised the spirit of the Dutch, and Amsterdam was ripe for revolt, when 300 Cossacks compelled the garrison to retire, and also took Haarlem; and on November 12th Vinzingerode and Bulow, with a corps of Cossacks, captured Amersfort. The French posted at Gorcum advanced on Amsterdam, Dordrecht, and Wörden, and though repulsed at the two first towns, entered the third, where they committed inhuman cruelties. In revenge, the Prussian Bulow when he took Arnheim by storm is accused of having refused quarter to the garrison. The Prince of Orange landed from England at Schevening, and was received as a sovereign prince by the authorities at Amsterdam. A Russian and Prussian force were placed in

* He was so enormously stout as to require an inverted curve in his dinner-table to enable him to reach his plate.

garrison at the Hague, where they were shortly joined by a British contingent; and the important town of Breda was captured by Colonel Benkendorf with a corps of Cossacks.

The funds the Dutch and Flemish set apart for the repair of their dykes were for some years absorbed by the payments to France, and these defences had fallen so much out of repair, that if the war had continued another year Holland and Belgium must have been submerged by the sea.

Immediately after Leipsic the King of Prussia went to Berlin, and, like his ally of Austria, fervently hoped for peace. Alexander marched with his reserve cavalry, and entered Frankfort on November 5th. Francis joined him the next day, and Frederick a week or two later. The Silesian army under Blucher was prepared to cross the Rhine on the 19th, but the want of Bernadotte's co-operation (who refused to enter the north of France through Belgium, according to the allied plan, but insisted on marching towards Denmark) rendered it advisable to wait for reinforcements; besides, the Cabinets of Vienna and Berlin urged peace, and even Great Britain began to take alarm at the power of Russia. When the movements of the army were discussed after Leipsic, Schwartzberg, wishing to prevent the Russians from occupying any prominent position, tried to employ them in blockading the fortresses; but Alexander thought a sufficient number were already engaged in that duty, and insisted that a corps of Russians should garrison Dresden. The Austrians showed so much ill-will towards the Russians that more than once they fell upon stray Cossacks. Even Wilson, influenced by Schwartzberg and Metternich, put in his voice for peace so loudly, that Gneisenau,* the chief of Blucher's staff, who was intimate with Count Munster, a friend of the Prince Regent, caused him to be superseded by Lord Burghersh.

On October 29th, 1813, ten days after the battle of Leipsic, Alexander, in a letter to Bernadotte, set forth his own ideas as

* Gneisenau, being anxious to secure Prussia's future safety by continuing the campaign, naturally wished to get rid of all who urged a premature peace; and Wilson, on December 7th, declared peace was necessary to the Allies. In his Diary, in 1814, he regrets Josephine's death, as he should have been secure of a good reception from her "for services past rendered." Only a year later Austria declared herself ready for a war with Russia.

to the need of continuing the war without delay. "Here is the plan proposed by me, and approved of by the Austrian and Prussian commanders-in-chief. Offensive operations on the part of the Grand Army between Mayence and Strasburg offer many difficulties, as we cannot leave the fortresses behind us without observation. By entering France on the side of Switzerland (that is, at Basle), we shall avoid them, as that frontier is not so strongly fortified. Another advantage attending this movement is the possibility of turning the Viceroy's left wing, and forcing him to a precipitate retreat. In that case the Austrian army of Italy may advance on Lyons, so as to form a prolongation of our line, and by its left wing connect our operations with those of the Duke of Wellington, whose head-quarters are now at Oleron. In the mean time Blucher, with 100,000 men, may form an army of observation on the Rhine, and without confining himself to observation may cross that river near Mannheim, and manœuvre against the enemy till the Grand Army reaches the field of action. All the four armies—viz., the Grand Army, that of Italy, Blucher, and Wellington—will stand on one line in the most fertile part of France, forming the segment of a circle. The four armies will push forward, diminishing the arc and drawing near its centre, that is, Paris, or the head-quarters of Napoleon. Meanwhile your Royal Highness may advance on Cologne and Dusseldorf, and thence in the direction of Antwerp; by which you will separate Holland from France, and oblige Napoleon either to abandon that important fortress, or if he tries to retain it, the necessary garrison will materially lessen his effective strength. The grand object is not to lose a moment, that we may not allow him time to form and discipline an army and furnish it with supplies; our business being to take advantage of the disorganized state of his forces. I entreat you not to lose a moment in putting your army in motion to further the general plan of operations."

But Alexander could not stir up the timid hearts of his Allies, Schwartzberg supported the peace party, and interposed every delay. Alexander demanded the chief command if Schwartzberg would not move. But Metternich showed plainly that unless Schwartzberg retained it he

would make a separate peace, perhaps an alliance, with France. Early in November a request arrived to Schwartzenberg to meet an envoy of Napoleon's at Hochheim on important business. Alexander said a Russian officer must go also ; on which Schwartzenberg declared he would not go at all, and named another commissioner. It was to offer to evacuate the fortresses on the Vistula if the garrisons were allowed to return to France. This proposal was rejected ; but when Alexander found all the allied Powers, even England, were inclined to negotiate for a peace, and that, except himself and the leaders of the Silesian army, every one expressed the greatest repugnance at the idea of crossing the Rhine, he agreed to offer terms which would admit of Napoleon retaining his throne, with the boundary of the Alps, the Pyrenees, and the Rhine—a larger extent of territory than Louis XIV. had possessed. The campaign had extended to a greater length than he had anticipated, from the reluctance the Powers on the Continent had shown to break their chains, although formerly he was beset with their entreaties for aid. France exhibited no outward sign, now her deliverers were at her doors, of wishing to cast off the yoke of her foreign tyrant ; and the rest of Europe was free.

The fearful state of Saxony, the roads strewn with fever-stricken fugitives and wounded Frenchmen, whose leaders left all their hospitals crammed to a pestilential extent to the Allies, showed war in its most hideous aspect, and he felt hardly justified in standing out alone against every proposal for bringing it to a speedy close, for Napoleon was no longer young. With age comes inaction, and years might elapse before he was again in a position to overrun Germany. Prussia had also learned her own strength, and a second time would be prepared. If the Allies continued to act together, Napoleon would not dare to enter upon another war against the whole Continent. Francis pleaded the cause of his daughter and her son ; and on November 13th sent a private note by M. de St. Aignan to Maria Louisa, telling her his entreaties had at last prevailed on Alexander to offer peace. This diplomatist also carried a note to Napoleon, pointing out on what conditions, if immediately accepted, they would forego their intention of entering France.

Napoleon, with his usual habit of evasion, expressed great willingness to negotiate, recommended Mannheim as the proper place for a Congress, and enlarged on the minor arrangements, but did not say a word about accepting the preliminaries declared to be indispensable. A proclamation in the *Moniteur* spoke of Holland and Piedmont as portions of the "inviolate Empire," and Napoleon tried to postpone the opening of the Congress, allowing six weeks to elapse without naming his plenipotentiaries. Alexander was convinced he only wanted to gain time to complete his defences and recruit his armies; and Napoleon's panegyrists have since admitted that this was precisely the case. The Czar therefore again insisted on the passage of the Rhine, and, aided by Blücher, it was arranged. Schwartzberg, thinking he should have a partisan in the old Prussian, sent a confidential officer to ask his opinion on Alexander's project. He answered, "We must march to Paris. Napoleon has paid his visit to every capital in Europe, and can we do less than return the compliment? We must hurl him from the throne he ought never to have ascended." A deputation from Switzerland arrived to declare their country neutral, although for some years it was Napoleon's active ally. Alexander was nevertheless inclined to respect it. But Schwartzberg refused to cross the Rhine at any point except at Schaffhausen, and he took advantage of Alexander's temporary absence from the headquarters to make his dispositions for entering the Swiss Republic.

At Meiningen, where the reserve under Alexander halted for a night on its way to Frankfort, the Czar was received by the Dowager-Duchess, the young Duke, still a minor, and his sister, the late Queen Adelaide. Constantine also went to pay a visit to his wife's family at Coburg, where he stayed a week; and then to Amorbach, to see his sister-in-law, the Princess of Leiningen, afterwards the Duchess of Kent, to whom he paid a second and longer visit. "His ardent wish at that time," says King Leopold, "was a reconciliation with his wife; but, unfortunately, it did not take place." Alexander also went to visit the Empress's relations at Hesse-Darmstadt, November 29th, and at Carlsruhe, December 15th, where he met his mother-in-law for the first time. Here were assembled the King and Queen of Bavaria, the deposed Queen of Sweden

and her children, and the Duke and Duchess of Baden. From Carlsruhe, where he stayed a few days, he wrote to his mother and expressed his weariness of the length of the war. He also forwarded an order for a day of thanksgiving throughout Russia.

The Prince Regent of England, in his address to both Houses of Parliament, November 4th, 1813, said that "the magnanimous and disinterested views of the Emperor of Russia had originally organized the system of alliance which had been followed up with corresponding energy by the other allied Powers,* and produced a change the most momentous in the affairs of Europe."

* Lord Burghersh, writing home November 9th, complains of the want of unity at the allied head-quarters. In a letter to the Duke of Wellington, December 10th, Lord Bathurst says: "The Russian ambassador has pressed me very frequently on the subject of your lordship's advance into France at the time when the Allies propose advancing there also. I have represented to him the hazard of that measure unless you were fully aware of the plan and progress of the allied arms, and were not assured that no armistice would take place. I have also endeavoured to explain to him how necessary it was for you to economize your force, as we had not the same resources as the Russian Empire. The result of these conversations has been his proposing you to be put into direct communication with the Emperor, at least with his Secretary of State, Count Nesselrode. I have the more willingly agreed to this because you may make your advance the effect of the Emperor's solicitation, and in confidence of his assurance of support. Part of his Court and army are beginning to be tired of a war in the succeeding events of which they are not interested." In a letter to the Duke, dated from Hohenzollern-Hechingen, December 31st, 1813, the writer states that none of Moreau's plans were adopted; he was so much mistrusted by the Allies. "I rejoice to see in Alexander the liberator of Europe, a title that the severest posterity cannot refuse him. He has shared all the dangers and all the privations of his soldiers with the greatest firmness. It is he who has brought the nations together for the maintenance of the good cause; it is he who has created and who alone nourished the good harmony among them, and who, to give the example of disinterestedness, has dissolved his army of 1812 in an auxiliary corps, an enormous but indispensable sacrifice to give him the influence he has. Half of Blücher's army are Russians. Schwartzberg, whom we call the stout Telemachus, is only the mannikin of Metternich and of the Emperor Alexander. The first protects him as a rival to the Archduke Charles, his sworn enemy, and the other favours him, so as not to be opposed in the command of the army. Count Radetzki, the chief of his état-major, an insinuating courtier, wants neither spirit nor courage. The best notions in this campaign did not, however, come from him. He was the antipodes of Moreau—that is enough. The Austrian army is like its monarchy, a compound of a thousand different nations, the opposite of each other in manner, language, religion, and constitution. It has no national point of sentiment. The Archduke Charles knew how to unite all these by a general attachment to his person; but the army is not what it was under

Sir Charles Stewart, writing to Lord Castlereagh from Friburg, January 10th, 1814, describes Austria as "ravenous for peace," even on reasonable terms, with France. The Emperor must wish it "for the sake of a daughter he very much loves." Prussia equally anxious. "Russia so eagerly longs for it that no man but the Emperor, who has stood alone as a sheet-anchor of perseverance and devotion to the cause, could have kept his general officers and troops so long here." He speaks of the plans for the redistribution of the continental States; how Austria claims the Tyrol and districts now belonging to Bavaria, who must be recompensed with a piece of Würtemberg. Würtemberg will require a compensation, as she is protected by the Czar for family reasons, though her King has carried on a treacherous correspondence with France, so that there is talk of putting his son in his place; and Baden's conduct is equally suspicious. Austria and England both want Prussia to be strengthened, to form a barrier between Russia and France; and Russia claims the frontier of the Vistula, but would make over part of Saxony to Prussia, except a part reserved for the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, &c.

After leaving Frankfort Alexander's head-quarters moved to Darmstadt, December 12th, to Heidelberg on the 13th, to Durlach, close to Carlsruhe, on the 14th, where the Russian army halted for a few days while he visited his wife's relations, and then marched down the valley of the Rhine to Rastadt on the 18th, Acken on the 19th, Friburg on the 20th, Kenzingen on the 21st, and Freyburg on the 22nd, where the Emperor again joined it in a day's rapid journey from Carlsruhe. Francis had already arrived at Freyburg, and dined with Alexander on his birthday, celebrated with a church service in the morning, and a banquet to the officers and ministers in the course of the day. He also received the welcome

him. Platof is too old for his trade. The French have never developed so much courage as in the campaign of 1813, and never more than in the battle of Leipsic. I ask myself many times the reason why in this interesting epoch a Dumouriez, an Archduke Charles, who is at least the best in Austria, and an old Count Pahlen, a grand character, are inactive?" &c. He adds, that among the Russian generals, Toll, Osterman, Rajeovski, Yermolof, Seslavin, Madatof, Peter Pahlen, &c., are much distinguished.

"The fondness of Cossacks for children," says another letter "is a remarkable trait in their character."

news that two French batteries at Cuxhaven had surrendered to the Cossacks.

Bernadotte expressed himself in passionate terms against a passage of the Rhine,* and Bulow when he entered Holland only separated from his nominal chief by force. As the clock struck twelve, December 31st, Blucher's army crossed the Rhine at three points, Mannheim, Caub, and Coblenz,† the Russian corps under Sacken being the first to touch French soil. Blucher‡ proclaimed to the French, "All who have pleasure in fighting for Bonaparte may go away to seek death and destruction in his ranks," and a postillion was seized bringing instructions to the general at Coblenz, telling him what to do if the Allies crossed. He pushed on rapidly to Nancy, where he made a speech to the magistrates, announcing the abolition of the salt tax and custom duties, the most unpopular burdens in France. "The King of Prussia," says Muffling, "hoped that peace might be brought about, and was thrown into the worst possible humour by the news he first learnt at Frankfort, that so far from this the passage of the Rhine was fixed for January 1st. He reproached Gneisenau and myself for not having advised against so hazardous an enterprise. He was not convinced by our reasoning, and persisted in his fears that the expedition to France would end badly." He never forgave Stein for opposing peace. He did not join the Emperor's head-quarters for some little time after Alexander entered France, but remained with Francis at Basle, where the Czar and the Russian reserve arrived on January 1st, as it was necessary to disperse the Allies rather widely, to obtain food and forage.

Sir Charles Stewart, writing of this period, says, "The condition of the Russian cavalry reflected the highest reputation on that part of the service, and their artillery was unsurpassed.§

* Muffling.

† A curious relic of the Russian occupation of Coblenz exists in a monument in the market-place, on which an inscription records that it was erected by the French prefect in 1812, "a year memorable for the invasion of Russia." Under this inscription has been added, "seen and approved by us, the Russians commanding at Coblenz.—January, 1814."

‡ It is to be hoped that the Prussians can now afford to give Russia her due in this campaign. They write and talk as if Blucher and the Germans had gained it alone.

§ Also Wilson.

I was inspired with a political awe of that colossal Power. I could not help, on seeing these Russian Guards, recurring to serious impressions with regard to this overgrown empire. There was no better physical or moral safeguard against the stupendous greatness with which the Continent might ere long be menaced and overwhelmed by Russia, than in the personal character of the reigning Emperor Alexander, a mixture of benevolence and rectitude, a high sense of religion and a generous view on all subjects. These afforded in my mind the only and best guarantee against the far too formidable legions then defiled over the Rhine, and that guarantee we have, alas ! lost.”*

* Campaign of 1813-14, published 1826.

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